DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 423 PS 021 931

AUTHOR Clarke, June S.
TITLE Strategies Addressing Discrepancies in Educational and Behavioral Priorities and Expectations between Staff and Middle-Class K-5 Parents.
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 107p.; Ed.D. Practicum Report, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Attitude Change; Elementary Education; *Parent Attitudes; Parent Education; Parent Participation; Parent Responsibility; Parent Role; *Parents as Teachers; *Parent School Relationship; *Parent Student Relationship; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Program Effectiveness; Questionnaires; *Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

A practicum was designed to address the discrepancies in educational and behavioral expectations and priorities noted on parent and staff surveys at a rural elementary school. The survey of parents (n=261) indicated parents' need and desire for education and training in helping their children at home. The goal of the project was to implement an outreach program to help these parents become more effectively involved in the education of their children. A priority of the project was to change parental perceptions: parents must abandon the idea that the school, teachers, and other experts are responsible for the education of their children and embrace the idea that parents themselves are the first and most important teachers of their children. Through a series of evening educational opportunities, training sessions, service fairs, and the establishment of a parent resource center, parental attitudes began to change, as indicated by their increased willingness to attend parenting events at the school. (Seven appendices contain copies of parent and staff survey questionnaires, summaries of survey responses, evaluation of parent activities, and a parent resource center "wish list" of desired books and resources.) (MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 366 423

Strategies Addressing Discrepancies in Educational and Behavioral Priorities and Expectations Between Staff and Middle-Class K-5 Parents

by

June S. Clarke

Cluster XXXXV

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

June S. Clarke

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

A Practicum II Report presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1993

PS 021931

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: David M Horan
David M. Horan

Principal, Jupiter Farms Community Elementary School

Jupiter, Florida

7/3/93
Date

This practicum report was submitted by June S. Clarke under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

7/23/93
Date of Final Approval of Report

Dr. Richard Goldman, Adviser

Acknowledgments

This writer gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Marilyn Thayer who acted as Services Fair Coordinator and Tammi Koski who was Parent Resource Center Coordinator. The author recognizes David M. Horan, principal, and Marilyn Weisgerber, assistant principal, for their support throughout this project. Gratitude is especially due to George Virgin for reviewing and proofreading these many pages, and to many parent volunteers and speakers for their thoughts, guidance, encouragement, time, and efforts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS iv

LIST OF TABLES. v

LIST OF FIGURES vi

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION 1

Description of Setting 1
Writer's Work Setting and Role 5

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM 7

Problem Description 7
Problem Documentation. 8
Causative Analysis 13
Relationship of the Problem to the Literature. . . . 14
Lack of Motivation and Internal Resources . . . 14
Belief About the Responsibility for Education 18
Lack of Training in Parenting 19

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS. . . 22

Goals and Expectations 22
Expected Outcomes. 22
Measurement of Outcomes. 23

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY. 24

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions 24
Establish a Resource Center. 24
Work for Adequate Funding and Staffing 24
Teach Role of Parents in Academic Success. . . 26
Moms and training 28
Dads and training 30
Marital discord 31
Plan a Home Visitation Program 33
Initiate Outreach Strategies 33
Prepare Preservice and Inservice Training. . . 35

Consider Specific Content. 36
Promote Parent Involvement
in Content Selection 41
Hold a Services Fair 42
Description and Justification for Solution Selected. 42
Report of Action Taken 45

V RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 63

Results. 63
Discussion 66
Recommendations. 71
Dissemination. 72

REFERENCES. 74

Appendices

A School Staff Survey 78

B Summary of Answers to Free Response Questions
on Staff Survey 81

C Parent Survey 85

D Summary of Answers to Free Response Questions
on Parent Survey 88

E Staff Survey #2. 92

F Evaluation of Parent Activities 94

G Wish List 96

LIST OF TABLES

1 Participation in Parenting Events. 64

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
1	Weighted Scores on Staff Survey	9
2	Weighted Scores on Parent Survey.	11
3	Modal Scores on Staff and Parent Survey	12
4	Mean Weighted Value of Parenting Events.	50
5	Weighted Scores on Resource Center Question.	51
6	Weighted Value of the Parent as First and Most Important Teacher	52

ABSTRACT

Strategies Addressing Discrepancies in Educational and Behavioral Priorities and Expectations Between Staff and Middle-Class K-5 Parents.
Clarke, June S., 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies.
Descriptors: Parenting/ Parent Involvement/ Elementary/ Outreach Strategies/ Parent Training/ Parent Education/ Effective Involvement/ Parent Deficiencies/ Parent Survey/ School Staff Survey/ Parent as Teacher/ Services Fair/ Parent Resource Center/ Parent as Tutor.

This practicum was designed to address the discrepancies in educational and behavioral expectations and priorities noted on 261 parent surveys and 107 staff surveys. Middle-class parents showed need and desire for education and training. The goal of the project was to outreach to middle-class parents to help them become more effectively involved in the total education of the child.

A priority of this project was to change parental perception. Parents must abandon the idea that school, teachers, and experts are responsible for the education of the child and must embrace the idea that they are the first and most important teachers of the child. Parents must become more knowledgeable about their roles, and about discipline, responsibility, and tutoring at home.

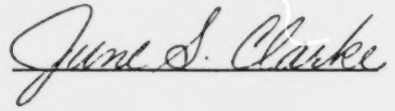
Through a series of evening educational opportunities, training sessions, services fair, and establishment of a resource center, parental attitude began to change. Parents helped plan the content of the evening events and helped carry out plans. Parents did respond to outreach strategies.

****

Permission Statement

As a student in the Ed.D. Program in child and Youth Studies, I do give permission to Nova University to distribute copies of this practicum report on request from interested individuals. It is my understanding that Nova University will not charge for this dissemination except to cover the costs of microfiching, handling, and mailing of the materials.

June 28, 1993



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The elementary school where the writer works is a neighborhood facility in operation since February 1991. The setting of the school is rural. It is serviced primarily by dirt roads, but most of the homes are valued at more than the median price for county.

The community where all of the students live is composed of 12 square miles bounded on three sides by canals, and on the fourth by a highway. There are no multiple family dwellings in the area serviced by the school, and no homesite less than one acre in size. The nearest shopping facilities, other than convenience stores, are located six miles away in a city of 28,000 residents which is a bedroom community for a larger metropolitan area.

Other than the school, the nearest meeting facility which could serve the community is six miles away. A church, however, is scheduled for construction within a year. The school is a meeting place for the community Crime Watch and a church. Parents come to school for such activities as Open House, the Science Fair, and PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) sponsored fund raisers. However, prior to practicum implementation, no parent education programs had been held at the school.

Light industry, recreation, construction, technology, and service support the community. Recent layoffs in major employers of the community, combined with recession in construction, have caused a rise from 5% to 6% of students on free lunches. A rise from 3% to 4% of those on reduced lunch occurred during the 1992 - 1993 school year.

There are 30 classroom teachers, and 24 other employees including a full-time music teacher, one and a half art teachers, a media specialist, a guidance counsellor, a speech therapist, two physical education teachers, and two SLD (Specific Learning Disability) teachers. Classroom teachers provide instruction for their own classes on a network of fifteen computers in the computer room once each week. Students who qualify for either a gifted program or a program for the emotionally handicapped can be bused from this facility to another for those services. The school is without an alternative education program, dropout prevention program, or Chapter I unit.

Parent involvement is high, as indicated by the presence of a very active PTO and the presence of many retirees who tutor on campus. A volunteer staffs a volunteer coordination office in the main office of the school. Through this volunteer office, parents and retirees are recruited and placed with teachers and students for specific purposes. During the school's first few months of operation in 1990, volunteer hours exceeded 3000. That

was 1400 hours more than needed to qualify for the Golden School Award. Volunteer hours exceeded 6000 for 1991-1992 school year. Through fund raisers, the PTO raised more than $25,000 for the school year 1991-1992.

The superintendent for the county has mandated that schools comply with new state regulations regarding proposed School Advisory Councils. Therefore, during implementation of this practicum the School Advisory Council (SAC) composed of staff and parents was established, as well as an Instructional Innovation Team (IIT) composed of faculty. A school vision statement was developed which states that this school "staff, parents, and community are dedicated to lifelong learning for all through a dynamic process of education in a changing world." The IIT also wrote the school improvement plan which was required by the same state regulations.

The school offers day care beginning at 6:00 a.m. Day care is also provided after school. Both before school and after school services are heavily used.

The school budget is $2,428,890, up from $2,370,589 last year. This represented a per pupil expenditure of $2960 for 831 students at the beginning of the school year. However, during the course of implementation, the school population grew to 865 students. Of these students, 96% are white, 2.5% Hispanic, 1% Black, and .5% are from other ethnic groups. Average class size expanded to as much as 36

students per teacher in some grades due to budget cuts and layoffs. The school year ended with the addition of two new classroom teachers, bringing the class size down to no more than 31 for all grades.

Each spring, the students in Grade Two through Five in this county take the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). During the first year of operation, all grade levels at this school scored above the national averages. The school scores were also above those for the state and district.

As the school year drew to a close, CTBS results indicate that second-grade scores for the school fell in three out of six categories, with the area and district also falling in all six categories. Third grade at the school fell in four out of five categories, with the area up in all five, and the district down in four of five. Fourth grade at the school fell in all eight of their categories, with the area down in one and the district down in seven. Fifth grade rose in four of five, with the area falling in one, and the district falling in four. Still, with the exception of two scores in second grade, all school scores were between the 56th and 75th percentile.

Curriculum in this district is mandated by state and county objectives. Textbook choice, and to some degree, pacing, evaluation, and sequencing are determined by the county. State mandated drug prevention education, sex education, and computer education are provided by the

classroom teacher in addition to the usual curriculum,.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer is a fifth-grade teacher with a Bachelor's degree in elementary and early childhood education, certification in gifted education, and a Master's degree in elementary education. The writer has taught both fifth and third grades previously in this county and fourth and sixth grades in other counties in the state. This year the writer taught a homogeneously grouped, high-level reading class of 36 - 39 fifth graders in addition to science and health to as many as 144 fifth graders each day.

Other duties of the writer are Science Fair Coordinator, (School Advisory Council) SAC member, IIT co-chair person, Faculty Committee chairperson, and presenter at county math workshops. Further responsibilities include teaching computers and drug education to the homeroom, and providing their fluoride treatments. The writer is the math and science contact person for the school. The writer was recognized as Teacher of the Year for this school for the school year, 1992-1993.

This year county elementary teachers lost their duty-free lunch. Because of that, this teacher and others, took turns supervising the 275 students who filled the cafeteria at lunchtime each day. Students and teachers all suffered.

Finally, the PTO stepped in and purchased additional lunchroom assistance with their funds.

The population to be impacted by this practicum project consisted of the parents of the students, or significant adults in the families of the students of this school. For this group, statistics are not compiled to reflect numbers of single-parent families or blended families. Neither are statistics available which reflect numbers of students in foster care or in the care of someone other than the biological parent.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The problem perceived by the staff of this school is that parents should be involved in a more constructive way in their child's total education. Despite the fact that parents sponsor and participate in fund raisers and give generously of their time in many ways to benefit the school, in an informal meeting with each grade level of teachers, concern was raised repeatedly about parents who neither discipline children effectively nor set and enforce appropriate standards of behavior. Teachers were concerned about parents who did not provide productive support for children's academic pursuits and who seemed not to know how to help their children academically.

Teachers felt that something is wrong when parents abdicate their roles to the school. They expect "the school" to do too much of the job of parenting. In addition, teachers are alarmed that children constantly ask what they will be given if they accomplish a necessary task.

Lack of constructive and effective parent support manifested itself in other ways. For example, the writer created a mathematics aid for parents, the "Parent Problem-Solving Packet." This packet was sent home with 30 fifth-

grade math students. After twelve weeks, only 6 of 30 parents had continued to involve themselves with their sons and daughters in these problem solving activities. Another manifestation of the problem is that students arrive at school too tired to learn. Their parents insist, however, that proper social development dictates that children play organized sports until ten at night.

These sorts of subjective observations lead teachers to conclude that, although there is a generous measure of parent involvement and support from some parents at this school, there still needs to be more effective involvement by the parents in the total education of their children.

Problem Documentation

The problem is well documented. Staff surveys (see Appendix A) of the members of this school and members of three other nearby elementary schools yielded 107 returned surveys. On the weighted scores (see Figure 1), only helping children with coping with divorce and helping with reading scored higher than need for discipline and parenting skills. At the other schools (see Figure 1), the need for discipline and parenting skills were also high. Summary of Answers to Free Response Questions on Staff Survey (see Appendix B) indicates more areas of concern, interest, and need from the point of view of staff.

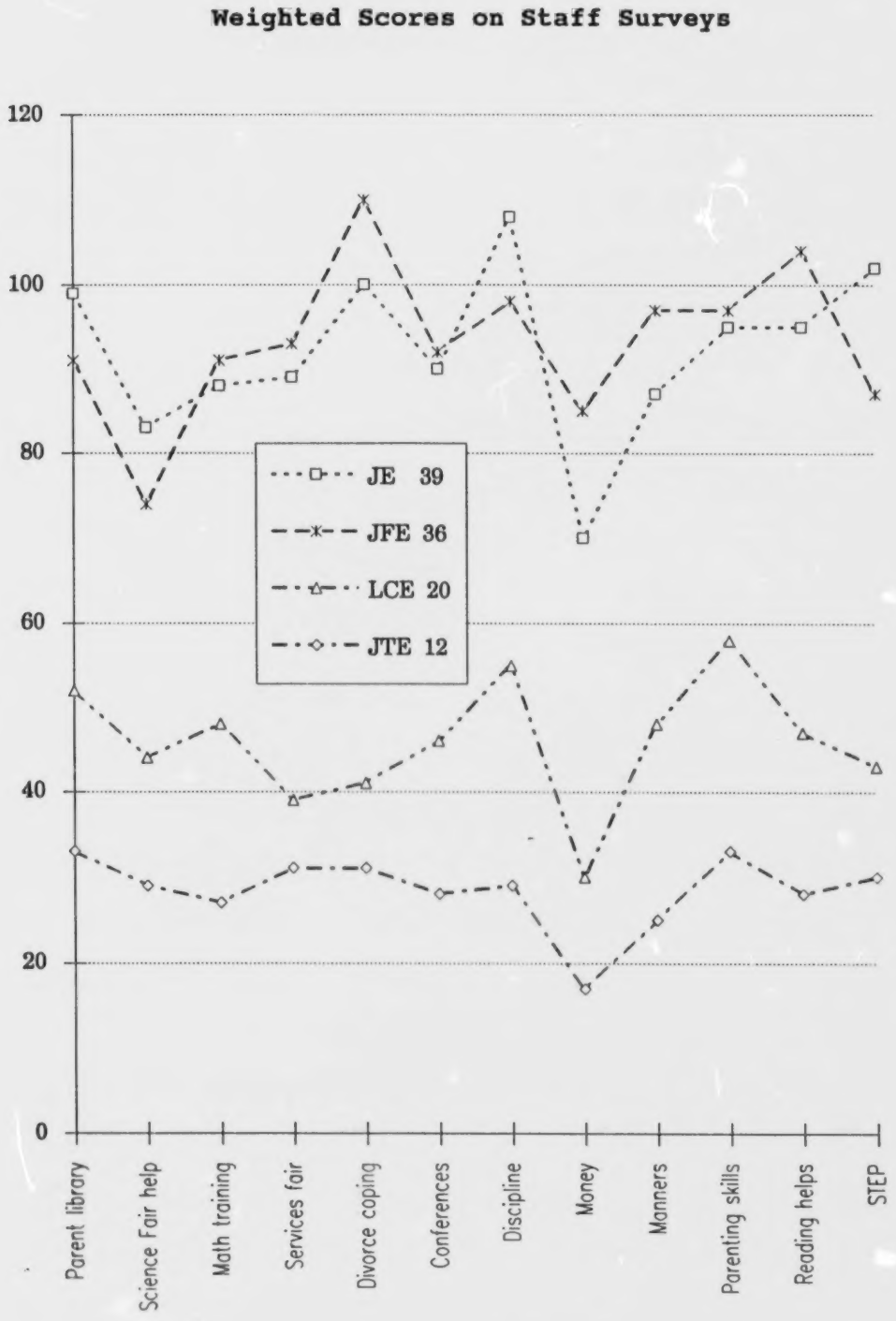


Figure 1. Weighted scores on staff surveys.

A survey (see Appendix C) was sent out to the 598 households represented by this school, and 261 were returned. Weighted scores on this survey (see Figure 2) show that K-1 parents would like a parent library. Grade 2-3 parents are most interested in help for coping with divorce, successful parent/teacher conferences, discipline, and parenting skills (see Figure 2). Grade 4-5 parents are least interested in help (see Figure 2). Parents of multiple children are most interested in a services fair, help with money, manners, and Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (see Figure 2). A summary of the answers to the free response questions on the parent survey indicates more areas of concern, interest, and need to parents at this school (see Appendix D). Both parents and staff agree in free response answers that parents need to spend more time talking, listening, spending quality time, and reading with their children.

There is a great discrepancy between the modal scores of the combined staff of the four schools and the parents of this school (see Figure 3). Teachers show a modal score of 3 in almost every category. Parents scarcely reach a modal score of 3 in any category. The few points of agreement include that parents of K-1 children, 2-3 children, and multiple child families, but not 4-5 parents, agree with teachers that helping children develop good manners rates a modal score of 3. There is also agreement among teachers,

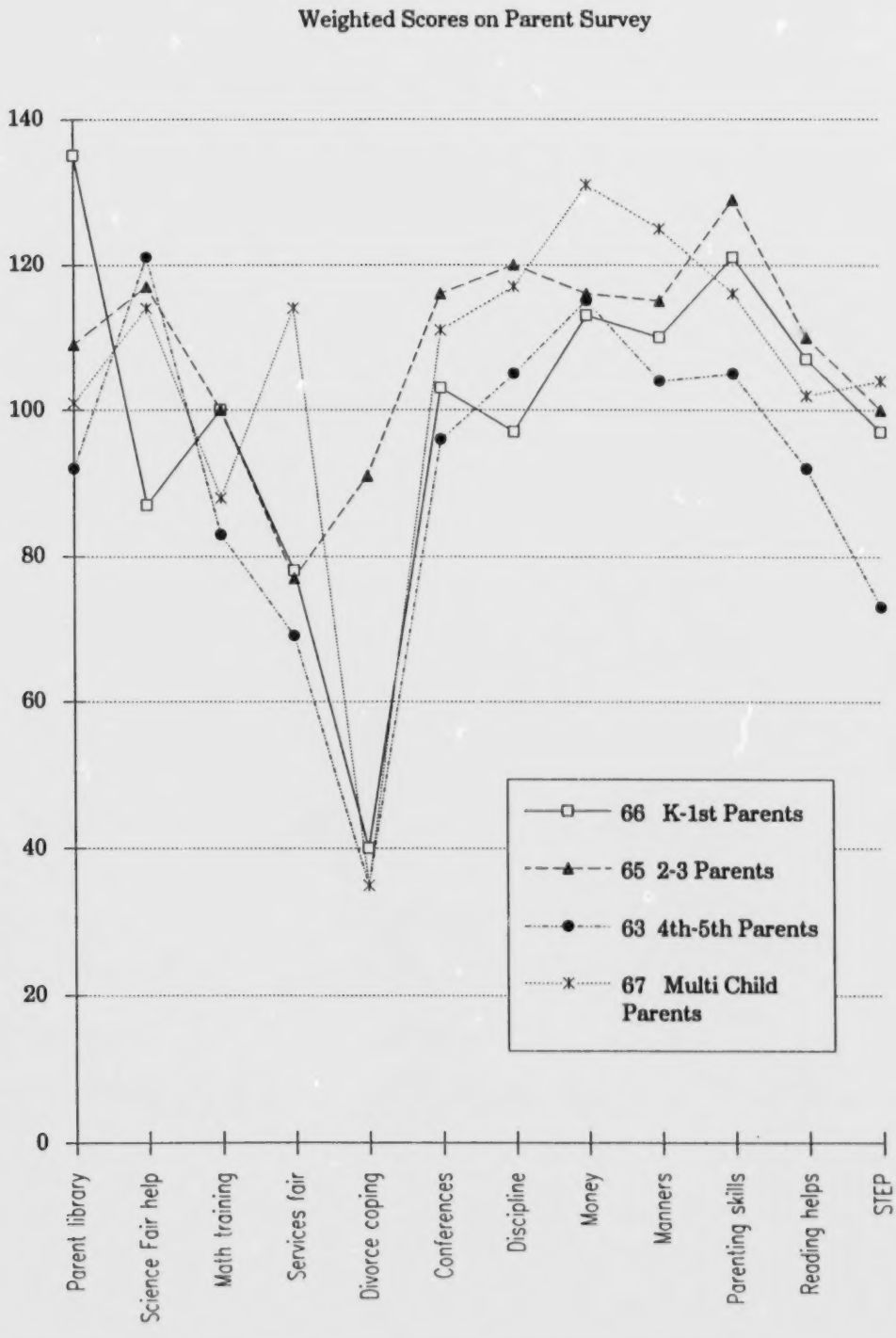


Figure 2. Weighted scores on parent survey.

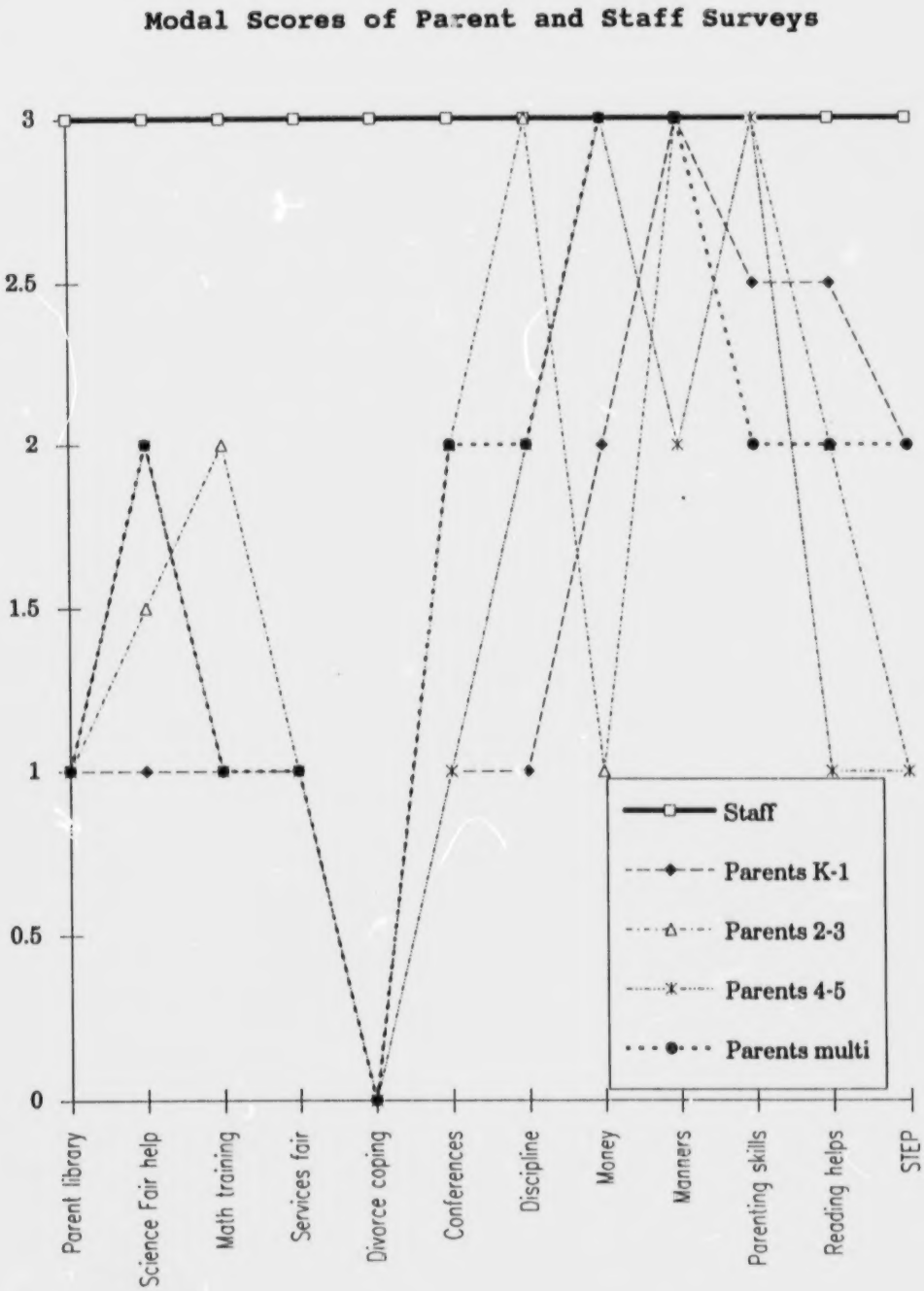


Figure 3. Modal scores on staff and parent surveys.

2-3, and 4-5 parents on the need for parenting skills.

K-1 parents value help with manners, parenting skills, and reading the most. Second- and third-grade parents value help with discipline, manners, and parenting skills the most. Fourth- and fifth-grade parents value help with money and parenting skills the most. Multiple child parents value help with money and manners the most.

To the six free response questions on the 261 parent surveys returned (see Appendix D), there were 128 responses to the first question on the survey. However, only eleven responses were given to the question asking if parents knew where help was already available in the area. On the 107 teacher surveys returned (see Appendix B), there were only thirteen responses to a similar question.

Causative Analysis

There seem to be three causes of the problem that many parents need to be involved in a more constructive way in their child's total education.

1. Parents lack motivation and internal resources for effective involvement with their children academically and behaviorally.
2. Parents believe that education of their children is the school's responsibility.
3. Parents lack training in parenting.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Lack of Motivation and Internal Resources

Parents lack motivation and internal resources, i.e. desire, skill, and knowledge, for effective involvement with their children academically and behaviorally. Parents don't respond to children's educational needs because children are "props for their parents' lifestyles" (Gall, 1990, p. 3). Parents give children material things instead of time and love (Gall, 1990; and Childs, 1991). Some parents, the ones who need help most, are resistant to overtures from school and more inaccessible to school (Downing & Downing, 1991; Childs, 1991).

The problem with parents is the problem of society. Parents, especially single parents, have less time for their children's education (Eitzen, 1992; Davis, 1989; Kennedy, 1991; and Powell, 1991). In recent years, families have changed in ways that do not facilitate parent involvement. Many children come from single-parent homes, dual-earner homes, homes without the support of extended families, and homes where the child does not live with the biological parent (Cross, LaPointe, & Jensen, 1991; and Lindle, 1990). Because of the flight of capital, more families have to be

dual earner families, so providing housing and other basic necessities consumes more of a parent's energy than it did fifteen years ago (Childs, 1991; Eitzen, 1992). Daily commitments affect available time and energy ability to be involved.

All of these stresses on the family cause children to enter school with reduced skills and readiness (Boyer, 1989; and D'Angelo & Adler, 1991). This stress in society results in downward mobility, marital separation and divorce, and abuse of alcohol, spouse, and children (Eitzen, 1992). The family exerts less influence on children, and children are victimized by media morality, including materialism, violence, drug abuse, and easy sex (Eitzen, 1992). The structures which support the family have changed in such a way that more violent behaviors and more behaviors likely to result in academic failure occur (Brown & Payne, 1988a; Eitzen, 1992).

Parents' negative attitudes about schools and teachers are part of the problem. Some parents are uncomfortable with going to the school site for activities, perhaps because of their own negative school experiences (Kennedy, 1990; Comer & Haynes, 1991; and Olmsted, 1991). Parents who do not trust educators, who value their privacy, who are extrinsically motivated, and who avoid communication are extremely difficult to get into a parent education program (Schaefer, 1991).

Parents do not feel inclined to support the teacher if the teacher is a stranger to them (Lindle, 1990). Some parents, through dependence on day care centers, have come to view all childcare workers as babysitters. Because of this they do not view the teachers as professionals, and are not inclined to work with the teacher (Lindle, 1990).

For some parents, their child's education is not a priority. They feel they have neither the knowledge or social skills for volunteering in the classroom or serving on a parent advisory committee (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Kennedy, 1991). Parents may not actually know how to build a home environment which supports learning (Epstein, 1987). Research on parent involvement in urban, rural, and suburban school shows that about 2 to 5 percent of parents may have problems serious enough to interfere at least temporarily with developing partnerships with their children's schools (Brandt, 1989).

Brown and Payne (1988b) surveyed teachers on all grade levels on their greatest discipline concerns and found that lack of motivation and poor parental support were the greatest concerns. In surveys of thousands of teachers by the Carnegie Foundation, 90 % of the teachers reported lack of parental support to be a problem, 89 % reported abused or neglected children, and 70 % reported students' poor health and undernourishment (Boyer, 1989).

In collecting data from 171 teachers in five elementary

and three middle schools with Chapter 1 programs, Epstein and Dauber (1991) found that parental involvement in middle schools is far less than involvement in elementary schools. Parents of younger elementary children are more likely to be involved as volunteers in the classroom. Involvement increases inversely to the amount of departmentalization. Involvement also increases inversely with teacher/student ratio (Epstein & Dauber, 1991).

Through this study, the researchers also found validation for Epstein's model of parent involvement (Epstein & Dauber 1991; Epstein, 1987; Kennedy, 1991; Chapman, 1991; Warner, 1991; Brandt, 1989; and Chrispeels, 1991).

> 1. *Basic obligations of families* include providing for children's health and safety, developing parenting skills and child-rearing approaches that prepare children for school and that maintain healthy child development across the grades, and building *positive home conditions* that support school learning and behavior all across the school years....
> 2. *Basic obligations of schools* include *communications* with families about school programs and children's progress. This includes the memos, notices, phone calls, report cards, and conferences that most schools conduct and other innovative communications with parents that some schools create....
> 3. *Involvement at school* includes parent and other *volunteers* who assist teachers, administrators, and children in classrooms or in other areas of the school. It also refers to family members who come to school to support student performances, sports, or other events....
> 4. *Involvement in learning activities at home* includes requests and guidance from teachers for parents to *assist their own children* at home on

> learning activities that are coordinated with the children's class work....
> 5. *Involvement in decision making*, governance, and advocacy includes parents and others in the community in *participatory roles* in the parent-teacher association (PTA/PTO), advisory councils, Chapter 1 programs, or other committees or groups at the school, district, or state level...
> 6. *Collaboration and exchanges with community organizations* includes connections with agencies, businesses, and other groups that share responsibility for children's education and future successes (Epstein & Dauber, 1991, p. 290-291).

If a school exhibits a good pattern of communication with the home, it does not necessarily follow that other types of parent involvement listed in this model are in place at that school. Of all types of parental involvement, Epstein & Dauber (1991) suggest that involving parents in learning activities in the home is probably the most difficult type to achieve. Therefore, it can be surmised that a school with a high level of parents teaching at home also has one or more of the other types of parent involvement in place. It seems that the other three types of parent involvement, parenting skills, volunteerism, and shared governance, are added to a school program between *communication* and *parent teaching at home*.

Belief About the Responsibility for Education

Parents believe that education of their child is the responsibility of the school. Some parents' discomfort at

going to school may actually stem from the belief that their children's education is not their responsibility once the children have started going to school. Some parents not only believe that education is the responsibility of the school, but they also believe that education is best left up to the experts (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Seeley, 1989; and Bristor, 1989). These parents fail to realize that they are teachers of their own children, and that they teach every time they interact with their child (Olmsted, 1991).

The accountability movement has helped foster the idea that schools are 100% responsible for the child's education, a responsibility too great for the teacher, and too little for the parent (Olmsted, cited in Anglin, Goldman, & Anglin, 1982). In addition, society sends parents the message that when responsibility for a task is delegated to specialists, then it is no longer the responsibility of the society at large. (Bristor, 1989). Another example of this is that once a fire department is established, it is no longer the responsibility of the average citizen to respond to alarms (Seeley, 1989).

Lack of Training in Parenting

Parents lack training and opportunity to learn how to be effectively involved (Chavkin & Williams, 1985). They lack training about their roles and training in how to make

best choices for their children. Because of this, many parents do not possess necessary attitudes, skills, and information to effectively help with school work (Elkind, 1986; and Kennedy, 1991).

Research in urban, rural, and suburban schools shows that about 20 percent of all parents become successfully involved. However, another 75 percent would like to become more effective partners with their children's schools. Those parents at all grade levels want and need information, training, and guidance from their children's schools and teachers (Brandt, 1989).

When parents are invited to be involved in training, many cannot respond to the training because a systems approach is lacking, child development and relationship theory is missing, and issues which separate staff and parents are not addressed (Getz & Gunn, 1988). The family needs to be seen as a system with multiple patterns of communication and influence among the members. When only one parent joins in the training, only part of the system will change. This change may adversely affect the whole system. Sometimes, training cannot be effective because there is already too much conflict and disorganization in the family system.

Parents have difficulty in their efforts to learn more about effective involvement with their children because school staffs do not have time for in-depth interaction with

all parents (Wolf & Stephens, 1989). Teachers do not generally believe that inducing parent involvement is their responsibility (Seeley, 1989). Collaborative effort is missing in attempts to involve parents (Seeley, 1989).

Schools are not responsive to the needs of the parents, and teachers are more sensitive to students' needs than they are to parents' needs. Teachers do not contact parents until there is a problem. When teachers do try to approach parents diplomatically, parents may view the diplomacy of the teachers as lack of cooperation and rigidness. Parents need and want training and answers about child growth and development and support in parenting from the school (Lindle, 1990).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goal and outcomes were projected for this practicum. The goal of this practicum work was to increase effective parental involvement in the total education of the child.

Expected Outcomes

1. Teachers at all grade levels will indicate that successful programs for parents were instituted by a modal score of 2 on Staff Survey #2 (see Appendix E).
2. Of the 598 families at the school, 200 will have attended or participated in a parent involvement event by the end of implementation.
3. On the evaluation form for each event, the parents will have a modal score of 2 (see Appendix F).
4. Ten parents will be involved during implementation in the selection of speakers, timing of the programs, and the establishment of a resource center.
5. Use of the Parent Resource Center will double from the opening month to the final month of implementation.

Measurement of Outcomes

Teachers were surveyed in a faculty meeting at the end of implementation (see Appendix E).

In the count of 200 of 598 households represented at a parent involvement events, the PTO meetings, bazaars, rodeos, classroom volunteering, and fund raisers were not credited. The count was determined through evaluation forms collected at parenting events (see Appendix F). Attendance at planning sessions was counted. Evaluation forms were anonymous, so the same parent may have been counted for several attendances, but since evaluation forms went to households, a second parent in attendance was never counted.

On the evaluation forms, parents indicated opinions regarding usefulness and value of the presentation, knowledge of the resource center, and awareness that parents are the first and most important teacher of the child. The modal score on the parent evaluation forms for each event was to have been 2.

Parent participation in planning was kept by listing the names of those parents involved each month. The total was tabulated at the end of the practicum implementation.

Use of the Resource Center was tabulated by the number of parents checking out materials.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The problem was that parents need to be involved in a more effective way in the total education of their children. Some solutions were gleaned from the literature.

Establish a Parent Resource Center

A parent resource center could be established. Pamphlets, calendars, workshops, classroom observations, and parent libraries are effective ways to inform and instruct parents (Bristor, 1987). A resource center should include videos for parents to view at home (Chapman, 1991). A Boston school reached 150 of its 350 families through its parent center activities in one year (Davis, 1991).

Work for Adequate Funding and Staffing

Parent involvement is important enough to merit adequate funding and staffing. It was through grants to teachers to help in their study that Epstein and Dauber (1991) learned that parent involvement can be increased by the teachers at the school, but the incremental improvements

come in ways that are unique to each school. Through a grant to Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) at three Grandview, Missouri, elementary schools, mental health professionals helped parents improve their parenting skills (Kennedy 1990 & 1991). In Illinois, the Urban Education Partnership Grants, valued up to $30,000, were awarded to schools, not school districts, for projects which increased outcomes for students, including increasing test scores, homework completion, grades, and decreased discipline problems (Chapman, 1991).

Congress recognizes that there is a direct relationship between parent involvement, academic achievement and improved attitudes, so the Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching (FIRST) was created in 1988 through the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (Cross, LaPointe, Jensen, 1991). Through FIRST, grants ranging from $40,000 to $180,000 were obtained by 14 out of 414 applicants in 1989, and 31 of 436 applicants in 1990. More of the grants were for preschool and elementary than middle and high school, but they were equally divided between urban and rural schools.

The San Diego County School allocated $100,000 for parent involvement incentive grants resulting in 16 grant awards ranging from $1500 to $10,000 with one grant for a hands-on science program produced and direct by parent volunteers (Chrispeels, 1991). Parents in Touch is the

Indianapolis program for parent involvement based on a three-year grant from the Lilly Foundation. This program features enhanced communication effort with a coordinator at each school site. There are adjusted hours for parent/teacher conferences, activity calendars, contracts, Dial-a-Teacher, Homework Hotline, a computerized telephone information system, 90 special workshops that may run in a series of six and be held at the parents' work sites, and special homework designed to increase parent/student communication (Warner, 1991). The League of Schools Reaching Out involved teachers in action research with each teacher on a research team receiving a $400-$600 grant each year (Davis, 1991). Nardine and Morris (1991) report that parent involvement takes sufficient staff and funding, but legislators pay lip service to the idea, and budget cuts keep legislators from supplying adequate funding.

Teach Role of Parent in Academic Success

Parents need understanding of the importance of their role in their children's academic successes. Parents need to make schooling a priority and to understand that the priority level which they assign to school is reflected in their children's level of effective involvement in the learning process (Berger, 1991).

Research conducted for Parent Involvement in Education

Project (PIEP), a comprehensive, six-year study of attitudes and practices of educational staff in a six state region, shows that the home is equal to the school in effecting behavior and learning of the child (Chavkin & Williams, 1985; and Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Parental involvement in a child's education is a greater factor in academic success than parent's level of education, occupation, or socioeconomic status, and parents who realize this augment children's success (Snodgrass, 1991).

Parents should be made aware of the great wealth of research showing that specific parent behaviors impact child intelligence, behavior, and achievement (Schaefer, 1991; Ostach, 1990; Bracey, 1992; and Kennedy, 1990 & 1991). For example,

> "parent self-directing versus conforming values for children and parent democratic as contrasted to authoritarian child rearing beliefs are correlated positively with parent education and child competence. Knowledge of ages at which infants learn and of parent influence on infant learning is correlated with parent and child competence" (Schaefer, 1991, p. 238).

Grolnick, Ryan, and Deci (1991) found in a study of 456 children in Grades 3 through 6 from 20 classrooms that children of highly involved parents felt more competent. Specifically, if the children perceived that their mothers supported their attempts at autonomy, then the children displayed greater perceived competence, greater internal locus of control necessary to academic mastery, and greater

autonomy. When the children perceived that their fathers supported their attempts at autonomy, then the children displayed greater perceived competence and autonomy. In this study, perceived competence, internal locus of control, and autonomy were the three variables which motivated performance. They comprised the inner resources which predicted children's performance. Internal locus of control and perceived competence are necessary to intentional action, but intentional action does not occur without perceived autonomy.

Parent involvement plans are necessary to any successful academic improvement or school reform program (Solomon, 1991; Leuder, 1989; and Lezotte & Jacoby, 1990).

Moms and training.

In a study of mothers and toddlers at-risk for developmental delay, Lowry and Whitman (1989) found that short-term, intensive, training of mothers was effective in improving their teaching behaviors and their interaction style with their children. The observations and training took place in the home. The mother were provided with three sets of toys and a handbook describing uses of the toys. The mother-child dyads were observed for activity-related prompting, appropriate prompting, reward, appropriate reward, punishment, and other verbalization. A trainer

instructed the mother in the skills related to observable interactive behavior and explained how these skills could be generalized to other situations with other toys. Maintenance checks were conducted from one to three weeks later. The mothers showed significant improvement in employing a complex set of prompting cues as a result of the training.

Portes (1991) investigated mother-child interaction patterns that might show how children's cognition is regulated and operationalized in the zone of proximal development through parental regulatory practices in joint problem solving. For this study, 32 fifth and sixth graders were chosen from eight different schools. He found that the maternal verbal guidance (MVG) style of mother-child interaction is meaningful and significantly related to children's scholastic achievement. MVG was composed of six process variables: (a) maternal regulation through verbal prompts, (b) mother/child elaboration, (c) maternal questioning for guiding the child, (d) maternal cueing resulting in creative, categorical responses, (e) maternal positive reinforcement and encouragement, and (f) maternal presentation of open ended questions and avoidance in giving obvious information.

Verbal teaching, sensitive withdrawal, and competence attributions given by the mothers to their children during instruction facilitate adult transfer of task responsibility

to the child in joint problem solving. Low-risk mothers use more distancing strategies and more competence attributions in their teaching. Low-risk and high-risk mothers differed substantially in their use of competence attributions, and competence attributions strongly predict task improvement for all children (Diaz, Neal, and Vachio, 1991).

Dads and training.

Fathers frequently lack training, social preparation, motivation, and basic skills to be involved one-on-one, to understand accessibility to their children, and to accept responsibility for the welfare of their children. However, through play/discovery groups and discussion groups for fathers and their preschoolers, fathers' options for involvement with their children can be increased (McBride, 1989). Fathers' sense of competence in parenting skills can be increased as well as their sense of responsibility for child rearing through this type of education (McBride, 1990). This education is beneficial for children because when children perceive paternal support for their attempts at autonomy and they perceive paternal involvement, then they perceive themselves to be more autonomous and competent. These perceptions lead to greater motivation and academic success (Grolnick et al.,1991).

Fathers have indicated a desire for specific types of

parent training. Most significantly, fathers want to know to know the definition of a good father. They also want to know how much pressure to put on children, how to handle discipline lovingly but firmly, how to deal with sibling rivalry, how to recognize developmental stages and attendant physical and cognitive skills, and how to spend quality time with their children (McBride, 1989).

Marital discord.

As a word of caution about parent training programs, Dadds, Schwartz, and Sanders (1987) determined the role of marital discord in the outcomes of a program training parents in behavioral techniques for conduct and oppositional child disorders. They researched the degree of interaction between parental training and the effects of adjunctive parental treatment for the marital discord. In the child management training parents were taught to use descriptive praise, consequences, and correction procedures to increase appropriate behavior when their child was demanding, aggressive, throwing tantrums, interrupting, or being noncompliant. They found that marital discordant parents who received the training in behavioral techniques for their child had significant relapse after six months. However, the marital discordant parents who received partner support training in addition to training in behavioral

techniques for their child had maintained treatment effects after 6 months.

Dembo, Sweitzer, and Lauritzen (1985) compared the results of 48 investigations using Adlerian parent education, predecessor to STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) and PET (Parent Effectiveness Training). PET, developed in 1975 by Thomas Gordon, based on the work of Carl Rogers, consists of eight three-hour sessions. Adlerian training is based on the work of A. Adler during the first third of the century. STEP, a modification of Adler developed by Dinkmeyer and McKay in 1976, consists of nine sessions meeting for 2 hours each. The researchers concluded that parents in behavioral parent education programs really do benefit from programs which teach how to parent their children. However, findings are inconsistent and may be influenced by the type of assessment, parent characteristics, and leader variables.

Healthier marriages produce healthier parent-child relationships because the marriage supports the parenting efforts (Goldberg, 1990). Marital quality, evidenced by satisfaction, support, and division of labor, is directly related to parental expectations and perceptions irrespective of parental anxiety and depression. Spouses with happier marriages agree more about child rearing objectives and children's behavior.

Parents with higher marital quality describe their

children more favorably. In satisfying marriages, parental perception of children's problem behaviors is more convergent. Mothers who are maritally satisfied set high standards for behavior of daughters. Fathers who agreed with their spouses expected more mature behavior (Goldberg, 1990).

Plan a Home Visitation Program

Home visits by staff or parent-trainee are part of successful parent involvement plans which lead to increased academic success (D'Angelo & Adler, 1991; Davis, 1991; Kennedy, 1990 & 1991; Olmsted, 1991; and Schaefer, 1991). These programs work well because parents like the informal setting and the personal touch. In the Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) program, home visitors make suggestions, model instruction, and keep communications lines open. Parents are required to sign a contract agreeing to two home visits per year (Kennedy, 1991).

Initiate Outreach Strategies

Schools should initiate outreach strategies based on the premise that most families want to help their children learn (Davis, 1991). "...our task is to identify the parents who need our help and to give them the information, support,

and permission they need to make health educational choices for their children" (Elkind, 1986, p. 38). The Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) schools in Missouri adopted the stance that it is the responsibility of the school to reach out to the parents with communication and education (Kennedy, 1990 & 1991).

Kurpius and Rozecki (1992) define *outreach* as

> "reaching out to those in need for the purpose of making a helpful difference... centered more on development and prevention issues, often focusing on the causes of problems and the corresponding solutions for addressing those causal situations... extending or making known available services to target populations... using a variety of communications systems to make known services available to those populations and to advocate and deliver services to them" (p. 176-177).

In a report of activities at Daniel Webster Elementary School in San Francisco and Hoover Elementary school in Redwood City, California, Seeley (1989) found that a new paradigm was created when the school reached out to the parents. It happened because these schools became involved in the Accelerated Schools project of Henry Levin of Stanford University. Their goal was to raise all of these inner city students to grade level by sixth grade. The schools became involved with all levels of parent involvement, but they did more of it because involvement of all parents was necessary to reach the goal. Through their efforts toward their very own mission, the schools actually developed a different model of schooling, "a model in which

parent involvement is a *necessity* and the school is seen as a collaborative community learning center" (p. 47). Although it was not their intent, their commitment and team effort paid off in a new model which actually abandoned the delegation model.

Prepare Preservice and Inservice Training

Teachers and all levels of administrators must realize that their attitudes toward parent involvement are important to successful parent involvement (Chavkin & Williams, 1985). Teachers are more likely to believe that the parents are disinterested and uninvolved when teachers differ culturally and educationally from their students, as in the case of below-average students. Teachers consider these parents hard to reach: working parents, less educated parents, single parents, parents of older students, parents new to the school, and other adults with whom children live (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Epstein (1987) reports that some teachers feel that parents without a high school education lack ability and willingness to help the students at home, but they need to understand that these parents could be effective if trained.

> "Teachers of math, science, and social studies may need even more assistance than other teachers in preservice and in-service education to understand how to involve parents in their children's learning activities in those subjects"

(Epstein & Dauber, 1991, p. 298).

Teachers and administrators need preservice and inservice training with carefully selected content for effective work with parents (Lindle, 1989). In Schaefer's (1991) four-year program through Cornell University, teachers "learned how to use nonthreatening approaches to engage parents actively as resources for the education of their children" (p.264). They showed an increase in ability to talk with distraught parents, recognize defensive behaviors, deal with frustrated parents, and to communicate positively even when the child was having problems.

The teacher's involvement in parent training is vital to success of a parent training program. However, teacher involvement could be indirect, as in communicating availability of training, and motivating and encouraging parents to attend. They also need to be sensitive to needs for child care (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

Consider Specific Content

Parent training and parent programs need special content and parent involvement in planning to assure success. Since most parents want and need information and guidance from their children's schools and teachers, schools have the opportunity to build effective liaisons with parents (Brandt, 1989). New methods and approaches need to

be found which would cultivate in parents new ways to be involved in the education of the whole child (Comer & Haynes, 1991). "...the major focus of parent education should be on influencing parent characteristics that contribute to competence and motivation of both parent and child" (Schaefer, 1991, p. 240).

Training should attempt to improve maternal teaching behaviors and interaction style of mothers of toddlers at-risk for developmental delay. This can be done by showing the mothers how to use a complex set of prompting cues (Lowry & Whitman, 1989). Training of mothers should include strategies to improve the maternal verbal guidance style of mother-child interaction: verbal prompting, elaboration, questioning, reinforcement and encouragement, and use of open-ended questions (Portes, 1991).

The work of Thurston and Dasta (1990) provides a systematic set of tutoring procedures that decrease frustration and increase performance in reading, math, and spelling. To obtain the subjects for tutoring in reading, notices were sent out asking parents to call a certain number if they wanted their children to be better readers. Their method of training parents to work with their children was comprised of role play of book selection, praise, correction, comprehension questions, and follow-up charts.

The steps to book selection taught to the parents were: (a) let the child choose a book, (b) have the child read the

first page or paragraph, and (c) if the child makes more than two mistakes, guide selection to another book. Praise, at least once on each page, could include comments on expression, remembering a word previously corrected, or sounding out a word. The method of correction of a missed word was: (a) stop the child within three seconds, (b) point to the word and pronounce it correctly, (c) have the child reread the word, (d) praise, (e) have the child reread the phrase or sentence, and (f) praise (Thurston & Dasta, 1990).

For comprehension questions, the parents were instructed to ask three at the end of each 10-minute reading session. The first two were to be fact questions answering who, what, when, or where. The last was a question related to information not directly given in the material. For help in thinking up these kinds of questions, suggestions made to the parents were to ask *why*, or *what might have happened*. If the child answered a fact question correctly, praise followed, If the response was incorrect, the parent was to give a hint or more information before asking the question again. If the response was still incorrect, the parent gave the correct answer. This was followed by praise. The final question was not corrected. Instead, the parent was to share his opinion about the answer (Thurston & Dasta, 1990).

In each session, the trainer explained the method, modeled it, and role played it with the parents, with the trainer playing the part of the child. The parents were

trained to the criterion of three successive instances of correct procedure. Following the session, the parents were to tutor for ten minutes a day for five days a week. Charts were provided for children to color in the minutes spent reading (Thurston & Dasta, 1990).

Parents in Touch is the Indianapolis program for parent involvement, featuring enhanced communication effort through coordinators at each school, adjusted hours for parent/teacher conferences, activity calendars, contracts, Dial-a-Teacher, Homework Hotline, a computerized telephone information system, 90 special workshops that may run in a series of six and be held at the parents' work sites, and special homework designed to increase parent/student communication (Warner, 1991).

Parents need training to tutor at home, but training parents to tutor at home is not the same as help with homework. It is a separate activity meant to be pleasurable for both parent and student. It should be done regularly. It should be done in such a way that the parents do not feel that they are making a sacrifice (Thurston, 1989).

Even in working with parents who were already involved in their children's education to the extent that they were working with the Follow Through program, Olmsted (1991) found that desirable teaching behaviors, such as asking open ended questions and asking that answers be backed up with reasons, occurred significantly more in the group of parents

who received specific training in these techniques. Parents liked training which emphasized one behavior at a time during a home learning activity because it helped them focus on the learning process. "Teaching parents to anticipate, perceive, and respond to positive behaviors can be an effective approach to parent education" (Schaefer, 1991, p. 241).

Presentations by child development experts and subject-area experts are commonly used to increase parent involvement (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). They became a regular part of the programs presented by the School Planning and Management Team, a group of parents elected by other parents in New Haven (Comer & Haynes, 1991) and by San Diego County Schools (Chrispeels, 1991). In San Diego, information for parents may even be transmitted by a monthly television show presented for parents by the county office.

According to Epstein (1987), parental obligations include discipline, making sure children get enough sleep, supervising homework, providing breakfast and school supplies, and getting children to school on time. When these obligations are not being met, then schools may have to reach out to parents. Schools may provide publications, workshops, programs, and training in child development, discipline, attendance, homework, TV viewing, the use of community resources, and making home a supporting environment for school.

Promote Parent Involvement in Content Selection for Training

Parents need to participate in, plan for, and organize educational activities (Bracey, 1992; Kennedy, 1990 & 1991; Schaefer, 1991; Nardine & Morris, 1991; and Ostach, 1990). Parents need to be involved in order to create a sense of empowerment. Parents need to participate in preparing for parent training and educational activities in order to foster the idea that they are the most important people in their children's lives (Schaefer, 1991).

Olmsted (1991) suggests that when establishing programs for families: (a) opinions from all participants, staff and parents should be solicited, (b) to start with, objectives should be limited to three, one which especially addresses the wishes of staff, and one which addresses the wishes of the parents, and (c) parent/child activities should be included in the planning. Research clearly demonstrates that successful students have reliable, long-term support from significant adults. Therefore, school reform must address the family/school connection through enabling leadership which fosters planned, systematic parent involvement initiatives (Solomon, 1991).

Olmsted (1991) and Brandt (1989) suggest that parents

want and need instruction on how to do home learning activities. These probably should not be the same ones that children are doing at school. To be efficient and effective, these activities should utilize materials which already exist at home.

Hold a Services Fair

A Services Fair became a regular feature of the parent involvement program in New Haven. Parents there chose to have a Share Night to introduce other parents to services provided in the community to parents and children (Comer & Haynes, 1991). The parents believe that no other effort could have done as much to bring social services, community services, and parents together in such a constructive way. The event was well attended by both educational personnel and parents.

Description of Selected Solution

The writer accepted the responsibility to outreach to the parent community through programs and training opportunities. In an attempt to gain wider support for the project and to create ownership and empowerment among the parents, the writer contacted parents who through surveys had expressed interest. The writer attempted to involve

these parents in the process of getting speakers, deciding content, determining meeting times, establishing ownership of materials for a resource center, and in financing and selecting materials. Whatever planning group resulted initially was to remain open to newcomers during the implementation of the practicum. It was not expected that the original planners would serve the entire eight months.

The results of surveys already compiled were to be used to identify needs and interests of parents (see Figures 1, 2, & 3). They were also used as a way to target specific groups for programs and services. The data contained in the graphs was shared with the planning group.

A services fair was held to create awareness of resources available publicly and privately in the community. Parents in the planning group were involved in selection of the community resources presented at the fair. They determined the best date for the fair, planned public service announcements, and wrote a newspaper article. Through fliers and the public service announcements, parents and staff of the other schools were invited to attend. This invitation to other schools was necessary in order to comply with the contingency for getting the first staff surveys returned from those schools (see Figure 1 and Appendix A).

Specific training was provided to targeted parents. The writer believed that the Thurston and Dasta (1990) method of training parents to help with reading activities

would be helpful, especially if teachers also encouraged parents to attend (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Therefore, one evening of reading training was provided for a limited number of parents of K-2 parents.

To address the suggestion that parents and children need to do educational activities together at school, a Family Math night was held (Chrispeels, 1991). This was a way to encourage fun tutoring activities (Thurston, 1989) which were not duplicated through helping with homework. The population targeted for this event were parents with their third- through fifth-grade children.

The need for parent education events was addressed. Speakers on three different evenings presented parenting skills such as discipline, spending quality time, and fostering self-esteem, good manners, respect, and responsibility. Speakers stressed the responsibility of the parents as the first and most important teacher of the child. Parents learned new techniques to assist them in nurturing academic success (see Appendix F). Information on child development was given. Parents were referred to the Resource Center for more information. Parents of students at other elementary schools were invited to participate in the large group activities.

Through these activities, the writer accomplished: (a) outreach, (b) parent involvement in planning, (c) awareness, (d) training, and (e) education.

Report of Action Taken

Throughout the eight months, an attempt was made to keep track of expenses for implementation. No fees or gratuities were paid to speakers, but there were costs of paper and printing, prizes for attendance, and various other costs. Each event cost about $30.00 for supplies, copies, and prizes.

During the Month 1, a flier was sent home asking parents to volunteer to help with planning the Resource Center, the Services Fair, and the events and speakers to follow. A list of 32 parent volunteers was compiled. Each was phoned before the meeting. Of the 32 people volunteering to participate and to attend the first meeting, only 7 actually showed up.

It was determined by the group of seven that the best way to establish a Resource Center was to create a "wish" list. This list would be sent home to parents with hopes that appropriate used books and videos or money would be donated. A parent volunteered to be in charge of this endeavor, and three others volunteered to help her. The mom in charge of the wish list left the meeting armed with rudiments of a list from previous surveys and catalogues from publishing companies loaned to her by this teacher. The group was to have the final "wish" list prepared by

meeting time in two weeks.

There were other accomplishments of this first meeting. One parent volunteered to meet with the principal and PTO members to determine the best location for the Resource Center. The group brainstormed for community services to present at the Services Fair. A speaker was selected for the first evening meeting. The group decided that there would be no parenting activities in the month of December. Although no one wanted to chair the Services Fair or the Parent Resource Center, several mothers volunteered to ask others who they felt would be perfect for the job. The parents at the meeting were enthusiastic and full of ideas.

The author was impressed with the opinions of three parents who had strong feelings about the first statement on the evaluation form (see Appendix F). The author had originally proposed raising parental awareness to the level that school and home share the dual responsibility for the academic success of the child. These parents felt that this level was insufficient. They felt that this expectation should be raised. They wanted these activities to make a difference that showed up in better behavior from certain other people's children on the streets where they lived and in their children's classrooms. They wanted other parents to understand that education is a parental responsibility. This author accepted their point of view and changed the evaluation forms to reflect that position. For that reason,

the evaluation forms and the focus of all parenting activities were changed to emphasize the parent as the first and most important teacher rather than dual responsibility of home and school.

It became this teacher's responsibility to determine the best night for the Family Night Math and to invite the first speaker. An additional mother who was not at the meeting became involved. She make 32 phone calls to all volunteers to remind them about the next meeting.

Month 2 was frustrating! At the second meeting of this group, no one had heard from the mother who took the catalogues and lists of the materials for the Resource Center. She did not attend the second meeting. No one was sure where the list and materials were. There was no chair for the Services Fair or the Resource Center. Although 32 parents were given a phone call to remind them of this meeting, only 8 mothers attended. Of these eight, only three were the same ones who had come to the first meeting. It was like starting all over.

To top it all off, several of the mothers brought noisy, little children to the meeting. These parents and children needed this teacher to monitor, entertain, and provide crayons and paper. During the course of the meeting, one three-year-old reached up suddenly. He pulled the fire alarm lever and triggered instant pandemonium in the building.

Nevertheless, this teacher did hold a Family Math Night during the second month of implementation. It was so successful that a second night was held. There were enough names on the waiting list that a third night could also have been held, but the press of other professional duties made that impossible.

The Math Night activities were limited to 36 participants, including parents and third- to fifth-grade students. The event was held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to coincide with the close of daycare at the school. The classroom was set with desks grouped in fours. A balance scale and weights were provided for each table along with a pack of bubblegum and graphs from "Bubblegum Math" (AIMES, 1991). The purpose of the activity was to determine which brand of sugared gum had the least sugar. The parents and students weighed their variety of gum in the packaging and began chewing the sugar out of it.

While they were busy chewing, this teacher did three things: 1) gave some statistics about the state of mathematics teaching and education in the U.S., 2) made predictions about how these children would cope with critical thought questions which were to come later in the evening, and 3) gave suggestions to the parents for making math relevant in the car, grocery store, and mall. When parents and students were finished with chewing the gum, they weighed it again. They graphed the difference for the

different brands of gum and used calculators to compute the percent of sugar in each brand. Finally, the brand with the least sugar was discovered.

There were a total of 21 evaluation forms returned from the 15 parents at the first Math Night and 14 parents at the second one (see Appendix F). All comments on the evaluations were very positive. All scores were 2 and above except for the fourth question, "More information on this subject can be found in the Parent Resource Center." The Resource Center, of course, had not yet been opened. For that question, there were four people who wrote in question marks, two who wrote in "don't know," and three who left it blank. The score for the Resource Center for this evening was 1.3, but the overall score for the event was 2.2. The idea that the parent was the first and most important teacher of the child rated 2.6 (see Figures 4, 5, & 6).

Also during Month 2, a person was drafted to co-chair the Services Fair with the writer. Two other mothers were enlisted to co-chair the Resource Center. Two of these mothers, recruits, not volunteers, became the most supportive helpers throughout the implementation. The PTO agreed to own the materials in the Resource Center so that if parenting materials from a religious perspective were donated, the school would not be accused of promoting religion.

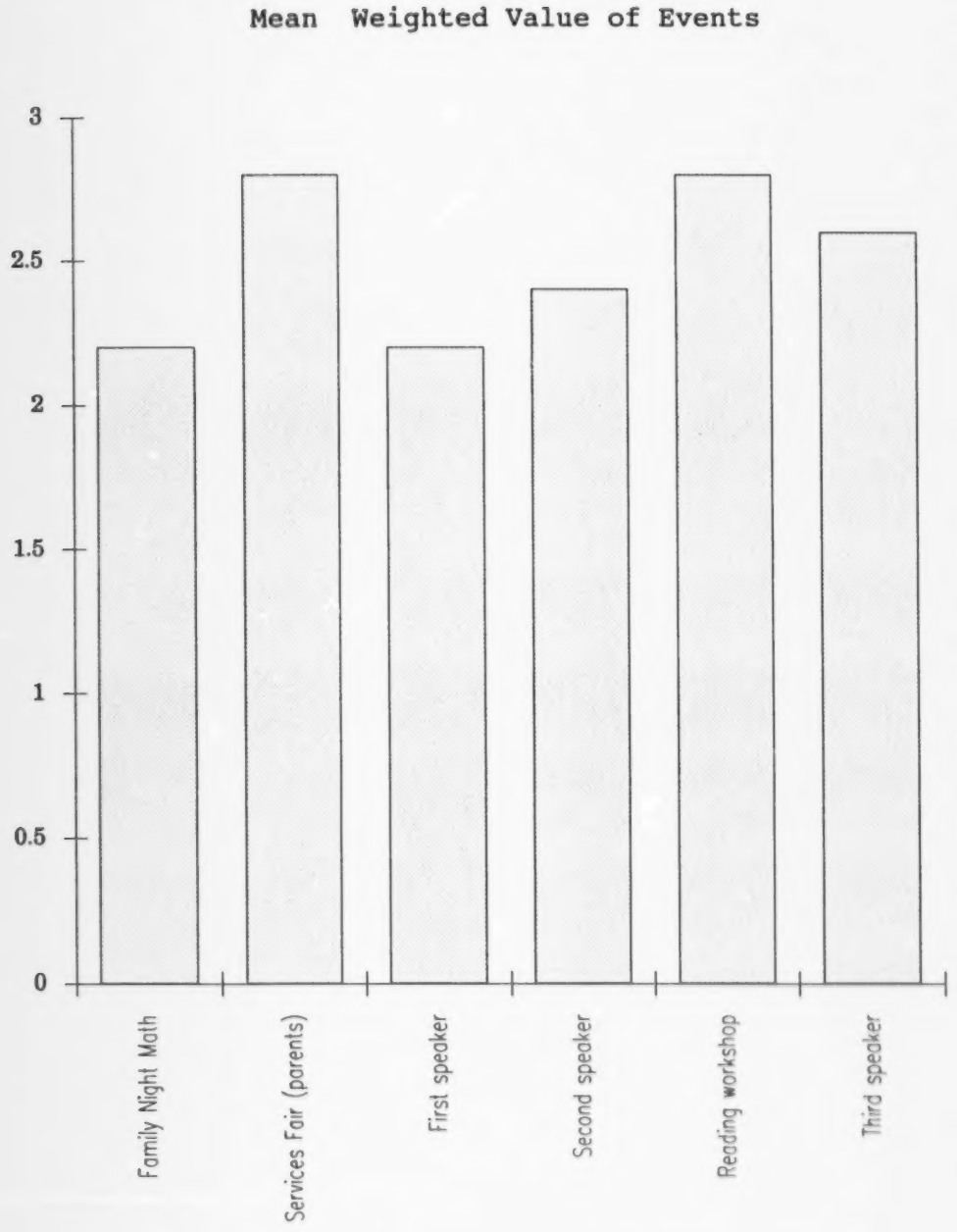


Figure 4. Mean weighted value of parneting events.

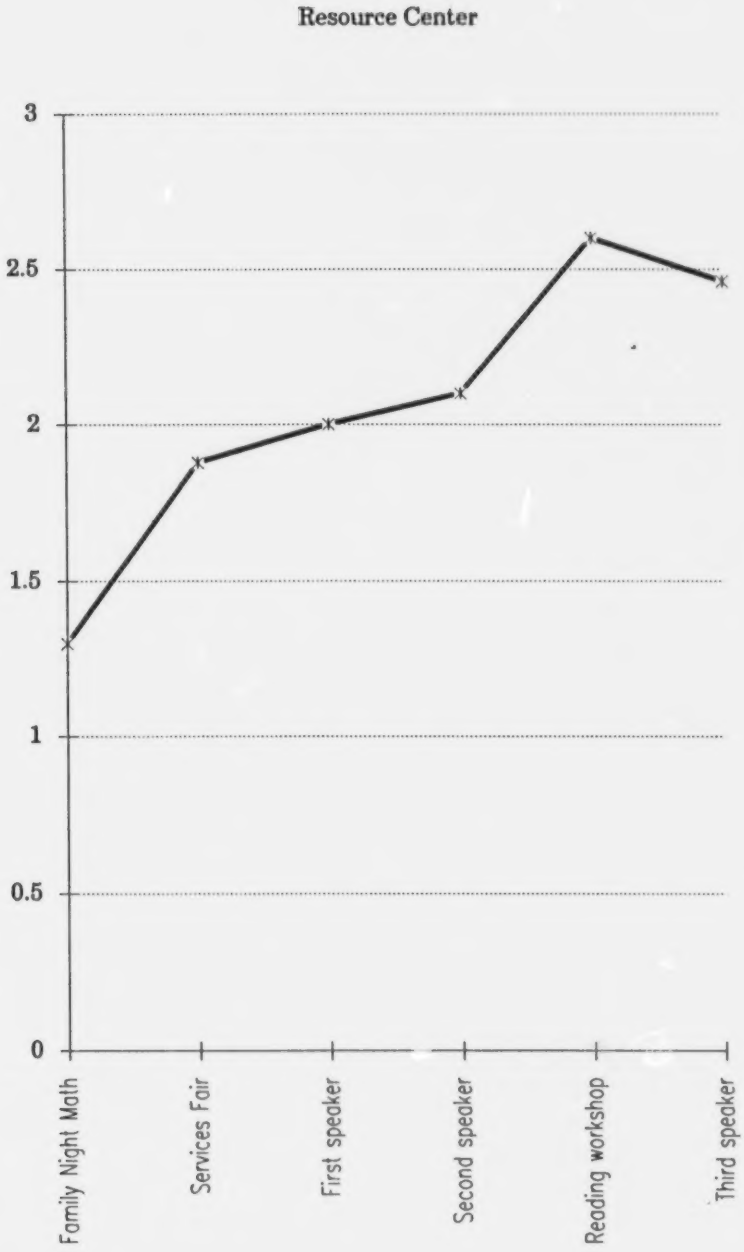


Figure 5. Weighted score on Resource Center question.

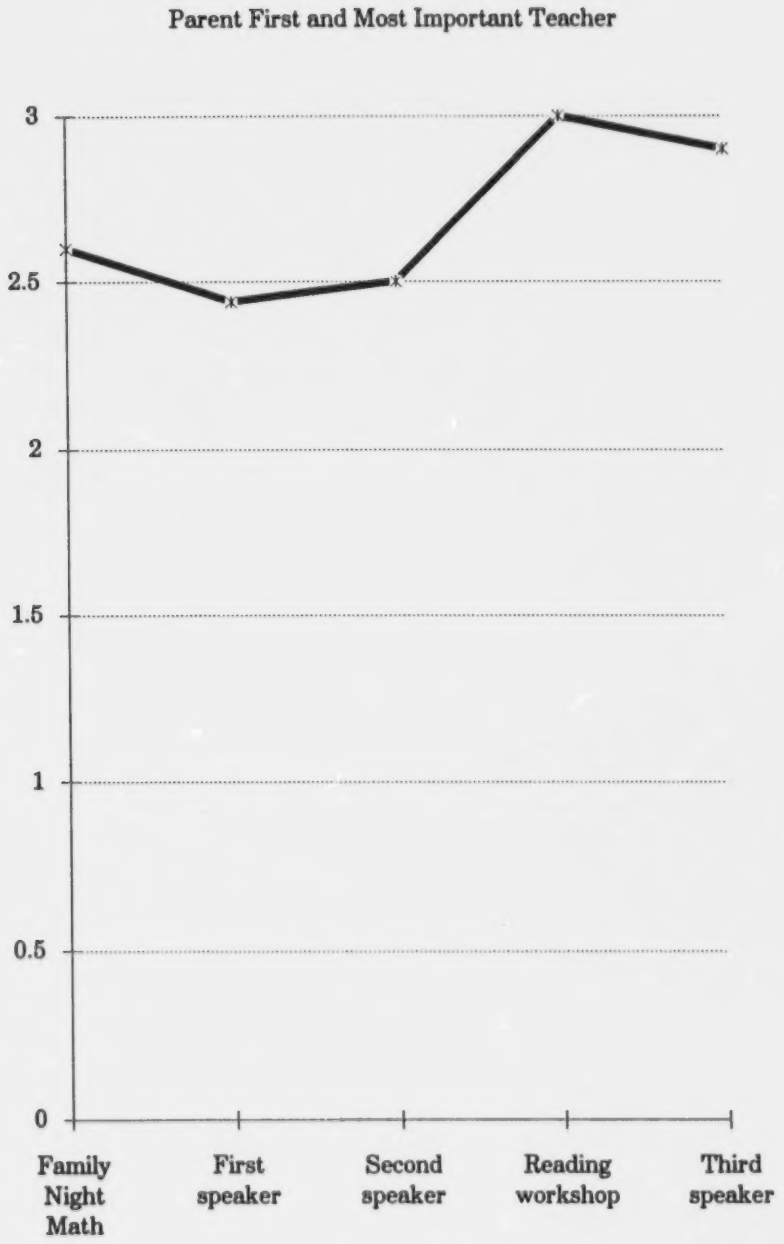


Figure 6. Weighted value of parent as first and most important teacher.

A location in a cabinet in the back of the office was designated for the Center. Check-out of materials was to be by honor system at any time the school was open. A mother who does publicity for a private, non-profit organization volunteered to do all of the press releases for upcoming events.

For lack of volunteer, this teacher finally had to compiled the "wish list" which originated with the parents (see Appendix G). After the initial magnanimous donation by one family of a series of five videos by Focus on the Family, materials came in slowly. This writer also had to prepare a flyer to announce upcoming activities because no one else volunteered.

Month 3 also was very busy. Copies of evaluations for each educational session and training session were made (see Appendix F). The flyer announcing parenting events had to be distributed to parents and staff at all four schools and to appropriate county office personnel. Announcements about the upcoming activities were also sent through electronic mail to appropriate school centers. Additionally, a parent volunteer advertised the Services Fair as a public service announcement request to 20 different news agencies. However, no agency responded to the announcement, and no advertisements were ever aired!

The original plans called for providing babysitting. These were scrapped because one of the services presenting

at the Fair was Kid-ID. The presence of especially little children at the Fair became essential their success and the success of the evening.

At the Services Fair in November, 20 of the 23 agencies invited to present showed up. The cafeteria was full. It looked great! The mom who co-chaired the event with the writer did a marvelous job of hostessing and making presenters feel valued. Of the 20 presenters, 13 returned evaluations. They gave the Fair a mean weighted value of 2.8.

The Fair was piggybacked onto a PTO meeting in order to mutually increase each others' attendance. Joint effort was necessary because the déterioration of the local economy forced mothers back to work and caused the PTO to have trouble maintaining attendance. In the recent past, PTO had morning meetings because they could not get evening attendance. Figuring out how to get evening attendance had become a problem for them since there were no longer enough non-working moms to produce significant morning attendance.

The PTO had 25 in attendance that night, their largest ever evening crowd. Sixty-eight adults, excluding presenters, attended the Fair. Forty-three wrote evaluation forms. Only one form was from someone who did not have a child at the school. The score for the Resource Center rose to 1.88. Parents and visitors gave the Services Fair a 2.8 (see Figures 4, 5, & 6).

Comments on the evaluations were varied. Presenters at the Fair were very positive. They expressed appreciation of their first opportunity to network with others who also offer services or educational opportunities for parents and children. Parents suggested a computer booth for the next fair so they could do computers with their children. They also suggested that an hour and a half was not long enough for the Kid ID company to do their work. It was recommended that the company be brought back on a Saturday. Another said that it was a great to attend this with their child after a hard day at work. Parents of the child who received space shuttle launching tickets from the NASA Space Camp representative were very happy.

The Parent Resource Center had its grand opening that same evening, although only six videos and eight books lined the shelf. Nineteen parents or school staff members signed the guest list. No check-outs were allowed that evening.

Month 4 was an anxious month. Six days before the event, the speaker canceled. Another speaker had to be found. It was too late to change public service announcements and fliers. However, the parent letters were rewritten and re-copied.

The parent letters were promotionals sent home just days prior to each event. They described the event about to occur and offered a popsicle party to the class with the most returned RSVP slips on the letter. In addition, they

offered a prize to the child whose name was drawn at the event if the parent was present. That child's teacher also was to receive a prize.

To complicate matters further, the plans to use the cafeteria for this event had to be canceled because someone forgot to write on the calendar that the Boy Scouts had a contract for that building. The library was available. The custodians moved the tables and set up rows of chairs. This turned out to be much better. The library is carpeted and that cut down on noise. With the tables out of the way, parents were easily moved into groups for group discussion. The adjacent room was available to show a video to the few children who came with their parents. The library continued to be the room of choice for speaking engagements.

The substitute speaker did an excellent job of encouraging and providing education for 55 parents. She taught about talking, listening, understanding and spending quality time with children. She emphasized the role of the parent in the education of the child. She gave interesting details regarding early infant stimulation, and she donated pamphlets to the Resource Center. Parents in small groups gave suggestions to others about good parenting techniques which they already used in their homes. Many of these techniques were written on the evaluation forms and included in the follow-up article in the local newspaper.

Of the 55 parents attending, 38 returned evaluations

(see Appendix F). The Resource Center rose to 2.0 (see Figure 5). The overall seminar score was 2.2 (see Figure 4). The idea that the parent is the first and most important teacher rose to 2.44 (see Figure 6).

Month five began to be more routine. No one preempted the meeting room. The speaker came as planned. Even a parent helped by maintaining contact with the speaker as time drew near. A parent copied the speaker's hand-outs.

The speaker, a humorist, entertained parents on the subjects of self-esteem, discipline, and respect while emphasizing the role of the home in the academic success of the student. The speaker found these parents to be very needy. He volunteered to return to to the school for free to present a six-hour workshop on developing self-esteem. He felt that some parents had no self-esteem to give to children because they had none of it themselves.

Fifty-nine parents attended the meeting, and 38 returned their surveys. Parents gave the Resource Center question a 2.1, and the speaker donated 10 of his booklets to the Resource Center (see Figure 5). The overall score was 2.4 (see Figure 4). The idea of the parent being the first and most important teacher rated 2.5 (see Figure 6).

Having the room adjacent to the media center available to show a video to children who accompanied their parents had worked well so far. There were only two to five children in attendance. The writer had always been available

while the speaker was talking to periodically check on the children. It was decided to continue this informal, unadvertised babysitting. The media center was working well as a meeting room also because nursing mothers could take care of their infants while comfortably seated on the couch in the back of the room.

The fifth month was also time to plan publicity for the reading workshop. Help was solicited from K-2 teachers in identifying parents with special needs. These parents were specifically targeted for inclusion in the reading training.

Month 6 was exhilarating! A reading workshop to train parents to work with their children following the model of Thurston and Dasta (1990) was lead by this writer for parents with children in kindergarten through second grade. The Thurston and Dasta method was modified to include having the parents actually work with their children.

The first 45 minutes were spent in training the parents. During the last 15 minutes, children were brought out of the video room. Then the parents practiced on their children the techniques which they had just learned.

The writer went into this workshop feeling a little apprehensive and worried that the information to be presented would be too basic. Despite efforts to target parents whose children had special needs in reading, it was obvious from the registrations that the effort failed. Many who registered were PTO parents frequently in attendance at

school functions. The writer considered that most of these parents would already know and be practicing good reading techniques with their children.

However, these reservations proved groundless. On the 13 evaluations returned by 17 parents in attendance, 11 parents gave the second and third statements a value of 3 (see Appendix F). There was no score lower than 2. That indicated that the content of the evening was meeting the needs of the audience. That the parent is the first and most important teacher rose to 3, and the Resource Center rose to 2.8 (see Figures 4, 5, & 6). The writer notes that during the course of instruction, two parents of kindergarten pre-readers felt that some of techniques being presented were not relevant because their children were pre-readers. The writer then provided time that evening to coach all parents of pre-readers in other techniques for their children. Demonstrating with the kindergartners, the writer suggested that these children should always hold the book in their own hands. The children should point to the words. The adult should read the words aloud only as fast as children point to them. Children should read aloud whatever words they know. Praise should be given to children for the left to right movement of the finger and for attempting to call out words.

All parents were given packets to take home which contained the major points to remember and ten weeks worth

of reading record sheets to post on the refrigerator (Thurston & Dasta, 1990). They were asked to follow these methods for ten minutes a day, five days a week. After eight to twelve weeks, the parents were followed with a phone call.

One kindergarten student was inhaling new words, and the parent was thrilled with the method. Two parents had tried these methods with first- and third-grade students who were either specific learning disabled (SLD), or who were being tested for SLD. In these cases, frustration was increased.

In another case, the mother was so enthusiastic she could hardly stop talking. She realized the reading war with her younger daughter was caused by making reading periods too long. Now they were happily on a regular reading schedule. She found that the method did also work well for her SLD fifth grader.

Parents of a second grader had become convinced that poor book selection was the reason that their child had hated reading. Now they were helping their child select books and have success. He had become an eager reader. They were spreading the word to other parents that book selection makes a difference.

Two parents already had a good method of home reading and did not need the charts. One mother felt guilty because now her daughter knew that she was supposed to have more

reading time with her mother, but mom was working and going back to school. Two parents tried the method for a week, but ball games and personal needs interfered.

The teachers of 14 of these students were also contacted. For four of these students there was noticeable improvement. Three of these students had always been good readers and change was not likely to be noticed. Three students were not following the plan. For the rest of the students, the teachers had no comments.

During month 7, the former head of elementary school guidance spoke to parents about problem ownership and responsibility. She paved the way for a group in Systemic Training for Effective Parenting to be established at this school as soon as the school receives the necessary waiver from the county. There were 44 parents in attendance, 30 returned evaluations. The score for the Resource Centers, parent as first teacher, and overall scores were 2.46, 2.9, and 2.6 respectively (see Figures 4, 5, & 6).

Month 8 was time to meet with groups of parents, get evaluation forms from teachers, and take stock in the Resource Center. The Resource Center now housed 13 books, 10 booklets, too many pamphlets to count, 1 audio tape, and 14 video tapes. The PTO had also donated a subscription to Parents Make the Difference, a newsletter which includes permission to copy. The most popular items were the video series from Focus on the Family and Dare to Discipline, a

book by Charles Dobson which was checked out 11 times. All totaled, 44 items had been checked out. Not all were returned.

Instead of follow-up phone calls for all of the events, the writer polled PTO members at their meetings. Their statements usually began with, "When we do this again next time..." They indicated that parenting activities should continue because they were interesting, effective, and needful. They made many suggestions about other community speakers to include for next year.

The author, as part of the Instructional Innovation Team, helped to write the school improvement plan for the coming school year. The continuation of parenting activities was written into the plan and approved by the Superintendent and the School Advisory Council which is composed of teachers and parents. The school will seek grant money to cover the cost of the activities.

This plan was reflective of the response of the teachers on their evaluations. Twenty-one teachers returned evaluations at this busy time of the year. The average total score was 2.69. Teachers also showed their support of these parenting activities by purchasing three of the new books in the Resource Center.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The goal of this practicum is that parents become more effectively involved with their child's total education. That goal was met in several ways. All projected outcomes were realized.

1. Teachers at all grade levels were expected to indicate that successful programs for parents were instituted by a modal score of 2 on Staff Survey #2 (see Appendix E). This expectation was exceeded. Actually, the total mean score for the surveys was 2.68. Only five teachers on this faculty attended the events and could not really know what the speakers said. Nevertheless, they rated all events with a modal score of 2 or 3. Comments on the evaluations expressed appreciation for the efforts to help parents.
2. Of the 598 families at the school, 200 were expected to attend or participate in a parent involvement event including checking out material in the Resource Center by the end of implementation. This expectation was also exceeded (see Table 1). Only volunteers who truly participated in an event were counted. Those who just put their names on a list were not. Parents in attendance at

parenting events were counted at the rate of one survey per family (see Appendix F). Checking out material in the Resource Center was also counted as participation. The total who attended or participated was 248.

Table 1

Participation in Parenting Events

Event	Number of Participants at One Survey Per Family
Volunteers who planned and coordinated	22
Family Night Math	20
Services Fair	43
First speaker	38
Second speaker	38
Reading workshop	13
Third speaker	30
Resource Center users	44
Total	248

3. It was projected that on the evaluation for each event, the parents would have a modal score of 2 (see Appendix F). That objective was abundantly met. The mean weighted value

of each parenting event was graphed in Figure 4. The results of two specific components of the surveys, parent as first teacher and Resource Center, were graphed as mean weighted scores in Figures 5 and 6.

Caution must be taken in interpretation of Figure 4. This figure cannot be used to say that parents liked or appreciated one event more than another since part of the weighted score was related to: 1) their growth in awareness that they are the first and most important teacher of the child, and 2) their growth in knowledge and use of the Resource Center. The figure can be used to say that, given a score of 2 as an acceptable standard of worth, all events met the criterion of worthwhile events.

Figure 5 can be used to say that parents can be trained to use a Parent Resource Center. Figure 6 can be used to show that parents can be trained to believe in their role as teacher. It cannot be used to say that they will expect the school to do less parenting.

4. It was anticipated that 10 parents would be involved during implementation in the planning and executing various parenting evenings. That expectation was met. There were 22 parents involved.

5. It was projected that the use of the Parent Resource Center would double from the opening month to the final month of implementation. This objective was also adequately met. Even considering that there were 19 people at the open

house who could not check out materials, there were 44 people who later did check out materials. Also, from Figure 5, it can be seen that awareness of the Resource Center certainly increased throughout implementation.

Discussion

Lack of motivation and internal resources, belief about the responsibility for education of children, and lack of training in parenting have been treated in this practicum as three separate parental deficiencies which are detrimental to effective parent involvement in the total education of the child. Parents, themselves, gave insightful and precise focus to these three deficiencies when they suggested the change in the evaluation forms. Suddenly, remediating the three deficiencies was seen as an effort which would require a specific change in a parental attitude about ability and responsibility. The writer is grateful to these parents for this insight.

Belief about the responsibility for the education of the child can be seen as a continuum. At the lowest level, parents believe that it is the responsibility of the school and is best left up to the experts (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Seeley, 1989; and Bristor, 1989). At the next level, they believe that the education of the child is a dual responsibility between home and school. At a higher level,

they understand that they are the first and most important teacher of the child. These parents understand that they teach every time they interact with their child (Olmsted, 1991).

Today's parents who do not see themselves as important teachers of their children are handicapped. It follows that, left in that state, they will help create another generation of parents who are likewise handicapped (Boyer, 1989; Eitzen, 1992; Davis, 1989; Kennedy, 1991; Powell, 1991; Cross, Lapointe, & Jensen, 1991; and Lindle, 1990). The solution to this is to change parental attitude through outreach which educates and trains.

A roadblock to this simple solution is that the parents who are the most needy are difficult to entice to school (Kennedy, 1990; Comer & Haynes, 1991; Olmsted, 1991; Schaefer, 1991; and Lindle, 1990). For example, it cannot be that mothers are more needy in math skills, reading skills, and parent training than are fathers. Yet, mothers dominated the parenting events offered through this practicum. The events with the single largest number of fathers present were the Family Night Math and the Services Fair. Of the 29 parents who attended Family Night Math, only 7 were fathers. Of the 68 adults who attended the Services Fair, only 8 were fathers.

It did seem to this writer that toward the end of the practicum, more of the needy, desperate mothers began to

attend the events. This is a subjective judgment founded on several things. First, the types of questions being asked in group situations seemed to become more intense. Second, the number of mothers who wanted to linger for personal time with the speakers seemed to increase. Finally, based on the increase in the number of teachers inquiring if "so-and-so showed up last night," it seemed that teachers became more comfortable with the remembering to recommend to parents that they could get help by attending these events.

The writer also noted another subtle change in attitude of PTO parents. It seemed that it began to be taken for granted that parenting programs were a part of this school and not a one-shot anomaly. Among these parents, it seemed that at parenting programs at school was the place for good parents to be seen. The problem remains to convince the mothers and fathers who do not understand the role and responsibility of being a parent and who never came to a single event.

Epstein and Dauber (1991) contend that after there is good communication between school and home, then parents add volunteerism, parenting skills, and shared governance to their repertoire. Likewise, after parents add these, then they add tutoring in the home. The writer notes, in agreement, that this is the first year in which this school has offered either shared governance or parenting skills. There were only a handful of parents involved in shared

governance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the parent as first and most important teacher was new to many parents. This premise is basic to accepting the responsibility to tutor at home.

If it can be surmised that the parents who were already the most involved were primarily the ones who came to school for parenting events, then it can be said from Figure 6 that there was a growing awareness even among them that they are the first and most important teacher of the child. Many among them must have begun these parenting events with the thought that the teacher, the school, and the experts are responsible for education (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Seeley, 1989; and Bristor, 1989). Their views apparently changed. One wonders, however, how much the change in this attitude documented between the Family Night Math and the reading workshop was due to education provided by the events or was attributable to some other cause (see Figure 6).

Perhaps variables such as age level of their children or the nature of the event were important in choosing a value to give to the idea of parent as teacher. The Family Night Math was limited to parents of third through fifth graders. The reading workshop targeted a younger group, parents of kindergartners through second grade. The Family Night Math was billed as family fun. The reading workshop was advertised as tutoring for parents in helping children with reading skills. Nevertheless, from the first to the

third speakers, there is an increase in the mean weighted value assigned to the idea of parent as first teacher.

Work must be done to ensure that adequate parenting continues in schools. However, a volunteer cannot be expected to continue to plan and implement parenting programs of the magnitude offered at this school this year. Likewise, a classroom teacher cannot be in the classroom all day, and yet, totally consumed by parenting activities after school. There needs to be money to fund special employees for these endeavors (Warner, 1991; and Davis, 1991).

More in-depth training than that provided by most practicum events is needed for parents. Parents will not significantly change their habits after one evening with a speaker. Training is necessary and some parents at this school want and will respond to training.

Judging by comments from parents, attendance at a parenting event was becoming socially acceptable, and at the event was a desirable place to be seen. However, some parents came not to learn, but to see how well they would be entertained. This observation needs to be built into future plans and used. It is wonderful that "at school for parenting" was becoming acceptable. Through advertising and word-of-mouth promotion, effort should be taken to make this even more acceptable.

Nevertheless, expectations for change in parental behavior need to be tempered by the knowledge that some

parents come to be seen, not to change. Another aspect of setting expectations for future parenting events is marital discord (Dadds, Schwartz, and Sanders, 1987; and Dembo, Sweitzer, and Lauritzen, 1985). This could be seen through the heart-breaking questions of some of the parents to the speakers as they expressed hope for a quick fix to their children's academic or behavioral problems. There is a limit to what a school can do for the child through parenting activities unless both parents are actively receiving help for their marital problems.

All of the strategies addressed in this practicum are outreach strategies. It is mandatory that the school reach out to the parents because many parents are unable to reach out to the school (Kennedy, 1990 & 1991). Strategies need to remain focused on those activities which influence parents and enhance the competence and motivation of parent and student (Schaefer, 1991). Home visitation would be the next logical step to take in promoting attendance at good parenting events.

Recommendations

1. To help parents become more effectively involved in the total education of the child, schools must provide outreach to parents with training and educational programs which are both introductory and in-depth.

2. In-depth programs should provide more training in specific, narrowly defined areas. Examples are: Systemic Training for Effective Parenting, a six-hour course in self-esteem, workshops in reading targeting parents of second and third graders, but a different workshop for parents of kindergarten and first graders.

3. The parent involvement activities need to be part of the school budget. The budget should include promotional efforts, salary for a parent involvement coordinator, materials for a Resource Center, and honoraria for speakers.

Dissemination

This writer has already shared these practicum events at a county Instructional Innovation Team (IIT) meeting where the county Superintendent, District 5 Superintendent, and the Director of Restructuring Initiatives for the county were present. At another meeting the writer spoke before Area 5 Representatives, the Area 5 Superintendent, and members of Area 5 IIT members. As a result of speaking at these meetings, representatives from two other schools asked for and have received the Services Fair presenter list along with directions for how to have their own fair.

Speakers who have been to this school have spread the word about the Resource Center. There has been at least one inquisitive visitor to see the Resource Center from another

university. There has been a request from a more northern county for information about how to establish a Resource Center. Requests for information from other local elementary schools were for information about what the Resource Center looks like, how it is staffed, and how materials are checked out. There have also been requests for a copies of the "wish list."

The School Advisory Council established by the state legislature this year has approved a school improvement plan written by the IIT. The plan calls for parenting activities to be continued. The plan also asks for grant money to aid in development of parenting programs at this school.

The writer has submitted to the to Department of Restructuring Initiatives a plan to repeat the reading workshop and Family Night Math sessions at other elementary schools. The writer has also offered to the Area 5 Superintendent to share these activities as appropriate.

References

Anglin, L. W., Jr., Goldman, R. M., Anglin, J. S. (1982). Teaching: What It's About. New York: Harper Row Publishers.

Boyer, E. L. (1989). What teachers say about children in America. Educational Leadership, 46(8) 73-75.

Brandt, R. (1989). On improving school and family connections: A conversation with Joyce Epstein. Educational Leadership, 47(2) 24-27.

Bracey, G. W. (1992). Predicting school success for at-risk children. Phi Delta Kappan, 73 492.

Bristor, V. J. (1987). But I'm not a teacher. Academic Therapy, 23 23-27.

Brown, W., & Payne, T. (1988a). Discipline - Better or worse? Academic-Therapy, 23(4) 297-301.

Brown, W., & Payne, T. (1988b). Policies/practices in public school discipline. Academic-Therapy, 23(3) 297-301.

"Bubblegum Math," AIMES Newsletter (1990).

Chapman, W. (1991). The Illinois experience: State grants to improve schools through parent involvement. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5) 355-358.

Chavkin, J. F., & Williams, D. L., Jr. (1985). Parent Involvement in education project, final report (December 1, 1984-November 30, 1985). Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, TX, Division of Family, School and Community Studies. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 266 872).

Childs, D. B. (1991). Changing the school environment to increase parent involvement. NASSP Bulletin. 75(535) 84-88.

Chrispeels, J. H. (1991). District leadership in parent involvement: Policies and actions in San Diego. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5) 367-371.

Comer, J. P., & Haynes N. M. (1991). Parent involvement in schools; an ecological approach. Elementary School Journal, 91(3) 271-277.

Cross, C. T., LaPointe, R. T., & Jensen, C. 1991). The FIRST grants: Federal leadership to advance school and family partnerships. Phi Delta Kappan, 69(1) 383-388.

Dadds, M. R., Schwartz, S., & Sanders, M. R. (1987). Marital discord and treatment outcome in behavioral treatment of child conduct disorders. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 55(3) 396-403.

D'Angelo, D. A. & Adler, C. R. (1991). Chapter 1: A catalyst for improving parent involvement. Phi Delta Kappan, 69(1) 350-354.

Davis, D. (1991). Schools reaching out: Family, school, and community partnerships for student success. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5) 367-382.

Dembo, M. H., Sweitzer, M., & Lauritzen, P. (1985). An evaluation of group parent education; Behavioral, PET, and Adlerian programs. Review of Educational Research, 55(2) 155-200.

Downing, J., & Downing S. (1991). Consultation with resistant parents. Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, 25(4) 296-298.

Eitzen, D. S. (1992). Problem students: The sociocultural roots. Phi Delta Kappan, 73,584-588.

Elkind, D. (1986). Helping parents make healthy educational choices for their children. Educational Leadership,44(3) 36-38.

Epstein, J. L. (1987). What principals should know about parent involvement. Principal, 66 6-9.

Epstein, J. L., & Dauber, S. (1991). School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. Elementary School Journal, 91(3) 289-305.

Gall, J. S. (1990). Putting families first. Children Today, 19(6) 2-3.

Getz, H., & Gunn, W. B. (1988). Parent education from a family system perspective. The School Counselor, 35 331-336.

Goldberg, W. A. (1990). Marital quality, parental personality, and spousal agreement about perceptions and expectations for children. Merril-Palmer Quarterly, 36(4) 531-556.

Greenwood, G. E., & Hickman, C. W. (1991). Research and Practice in Parent Involvement: Implications for Teacher Education. The Elementary School Journal, 91 279-288.

Grolnick, W. S., Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (1991). Inner resources for school achievement: Motivational mediators of children's perceptions of their parents. Journal of Educational Psychology, 83(4) 508-517.

Kennedy, C. (1991). Parent involvement: It takes PEP. Principal, 70(4) 27-28.

Kennedy, C. (1990). The ups and downs: Common home-school experiences teach all. The School Administrator, 47(6) 22-23.

Kurpius, D. J., & Rozecki, T. (1992). Outreach, advocacy, and consultation: a framework for prevention and intervention. Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, 26(3) 176-189.

Lezotte, L. W., & Jacoby, B. C. (1990). A Guide to the School Improvement Process based on Effective Schools Research. Okemon, Michigan: Effective Schools Products, Ltd.

Lindle, J. C. (1990). Five reasons to prepare your staff for parent involvement. School Administrator, 47(6) 19-22.

Lowry, J. A., & Whitman, T. L. (1989). Generalization of parenting skills: an early intervention program. Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 11(1) 45-64

Nardine, F. E., & Morris, R. D. (1991). Parent involvement in the states: How firm is the commitment? Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5) 363-366.

Olmsted, P. P. (1991). Parent involvement in elementary education: Findings and suggestions from the follow through program. Elementary School Journal, 91(3) 221-231.

Ostach, C. A. 1990). Educating our children in the '90s. Children Today, 19(6) 28-30.

Portes, P. R. (1991). Assessing children's cognitive environment through parent-child interactions. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 24(3) 30-37.

Powell, D. R. (1991). How schools support families: Critical policy tensions. The Elementary School Journal, 91 307-319.

Schaefer, E. S. (1991). Goals for parent and future-parent education: Research on parental beliefs and behavior. The Elementary School Journal, 91(3) 239-247.

Seeley, D. S. (1989). A new paradigm for parent involvement. Educational Leadership, 47(2) 46-48.

Snodgrass, D. M. (1991). The parent connection. Adolescence, 26(101) 83-87.

Solomon, Z. P. (1991) California's policy on parent involvement: State leadership for local initiatives. Phi Delta Kappan 72(5) 359-362.

Thurston, L. P., & Dasta, L. (1990). An analysis of in-home parent tutoring procedures: Effects on children's academic behavior at home and in school and on parents' tutoring behaviors. Remedial and Special Education, 11(4) 41-51.

Thurston, L. P. (1989). Helping parents tutor their children: A success story. Academic Therapy, 24(5) 579-587.

Warner, I. (1991). Parents in touch: District leadership for parent involvement. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5) 372-375.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL STAFF SURVEY

School Staff Survey

Check one:

I am an assistant ___
I am an administrator ___
I am a psychologist or guidance counselor ___
I am a teacher in grades K-1___, 2-3___, 4-5___, a special area ___
I am a staff person not listed above ___

The goal of this project is to provide opportunities to parents that are needed, relevant, and beneficial for both parents and students; and yet would not increase your work load. Decide to what extent each of following suggestions may be in keeping with the goal. Please assign scores of 0 - 3 to each of the following statements.

0 = not goal oriented
1 = probably not very goal oriented
2 = goal oriented
3 = very goal oriented

1. A film library from which parents could check out self-help tapes on parenting skills. ___

2. A speaker on preparing students for the Science Fair. ___

3. A facilitator to train parents in doing math activities at home with specific age levels of children. ---

4. A Services Fair where parents could explore exhibits from public and private mental health agencies, tutoring services, an Early Child Learning Center, Kid ID, etc. ___

5. A speaker on helping children cope with divorce. ___

6. A speaker on having successful parent conferences, and what parents should and should not expect from teachers at various grade levels. ---

7. Speakers on successful discipline techniques. ___

8. Speakers on helping children understand, save, and invest money. ___

9. Speakers on helping children develop good manners. ___

10. Speakers on other aspects of parenting skills such as establishing routines, following through on training, establishing expectations for

children at various developmental levels; and using rewards, punishments, and bribes. ___

11. A speaker on doing reading activities at home with students. ___

12. Programs such as Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP). ___

****

If you have an opinion on any of the following, please express it.

1. What do you think parents should do for their students that many do not now do?

2. What do you think parents do which they should stop doing?

3. What are you less able to do for students under the present budgets constraints that you wish parents would do?

4. Suggest another opportunity for parents which should be considered.

5. Recommend a speaker, a film or film series, books, or a group or agency to invite to a services fair.

6. If you would like to be a speaker, facilitator, or consultant, please give your name and topic.

7. Identify a great resource for opportunities for parents in this community.

8. Identify a possible source of funds for this project.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO FREE RESPONSE QUESTIONS ON STAFF SURVEY

Summary of Answers to Free Response Questions on Staff Survey

1. **What do you think parents should do for their students that many do not now do?**
   - 50 Talk, listen, understand, spend quality time, love, nurture, be parents
   - 36 Discipline with consistent natural & logical consequences, tough love, supervise
   - 32 Read, help with school work, be involved at school
   - 30 Teach respect for all adults, teach responsibility, teach social conduct
   - 30 Make school a priority, value education, set example, support the teacher, make certain children have school supplies
   - 18 Schedule homework, bedtime, & arrival at school
   - 3 Take them on educational outings

2. **What do you think parents do which they should stop doing?**
   - 37 Stop being permissive, forget to teach meaning of "no", give in, get hooked into arguments after having said "no," allow talking back, expect school to do all training, blame others for child's behavior, excuse poor behavior, manners, and study habits
   - 26 Using poor discipline techniques -lecture, threat, hit, ignore, criticize, compare siblings, use medication instead of discipline, give "things" instead of encouraging pride in accomplishment
   - 10 Allow unsupervised activities including tv
   - 13 Set poor example - smoke, drink, use bad language, show poor manners, complain too much, take children out of school for trips, tear down teachers
   - 4 Pressure children to achieve too much, be perfect
   - 1 Buy basal readers at TEACH

3. **What are you less able to do for students under the present budgets constraints that you wish parents would do?**
   - 27 Give individual attention.
   - 14 Pay for rewards, buy other materials
   - 7 Drill and review students
   - 6 Field trips, extra-curricular experiences, hands-on experiences
   - 5 Follow up
   - 3 Volunteer to do paper work in the classroom
   - 3 Individual and group counseling
   - 1 Provide breakfast and snacks

1 Insist on money for education
1 Mark child's belongings

4. **Suggest another opportunity for parents which should be considered.**
   4 Supervise after school study halls, lunchroom
   2 Travel with kids
   1 Use schools for more programs all the time for adults, including the PE facilities
   1 Have panel discussions - Teachers vs Parents
   1 Once a month forum to allow parents to discuss concerns
   1 A parent/child activity done together as a team
   1 Required parenting classes
   1 How to teach moral values like honesty and respect
   1 Divorced parents being friends for the sake of the child

5. **Recommend a speaker, a film or film series, books, or a group or agency to invite to a services fair.**
   4 James Dobson film series, Dr. James Dobson "The Strong Willed Child," "Dare to Discipline"
   4 Sandy Pines
   4 Parent Effectiveness Training by local elementary, high school and college personnel
   2 Stress management - Dr. Bob Crandall, Dr. Harold Howard
   2 Tough Love
   1 Creative Conflict Solving for Kids Grades K-3, Peace Works
   1 Parent Child
   1 Handicapped athletes - to show good sportsmanship
   1 Speakers who presented CORE workshop in 1991/1992 at the Ramada Inn - the dysfunctional family
   1 First United Church of Christ
   1 Dr. Ruth Peters "Who's in Charge"
   1 Lee Cantor - Assertive Discipline
   1 Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts

6. **If you would like to be a speaker, facilitator, or consultant, please give your name and topic.**
   M. Ertel - "Setting Limits for your E. H. Child"

7. **If you know a great resource for opportunities for parents in this community, please identify it.**
   4 Church
   2 Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
   1 Horses for the Handicapped
   1 Susan Widder
   1 Parent Center - Jupiter Elementary
   1 Sandy Pines
   1 Center for Family Services

1 Kravis Center tours to children
1 FPL

8. **Identify a possible source of funds for this project.**
Sell school logos
Levy a school tax & elect officials to oversee expenses
P&W, PTO, FPL, parents

APPENDIX C

PARENT SURVEY

Parent Survey

Check one:

I am a parent of a child or children in grades K - 1 ___,

2 - 3 ___, or 4 - 5 ___.

Please express your opinion about a project being considered which may provide some of the following opportunities to parents during early evening hours at the elementary school with babysitting supplied. Put the number which expresses your opinion beside each suggestion.

0 = Would definitely not be interesting, important, or useful
1 = Might be interesting, important, and useful to me
2 = Would be interesting, important, and useful to me
3 = Would be very interesting, important, and useful to me

1. A library of video tapes and books from which parents could check out self-help materials on parenting skills. ___

2. A program on preparing students for the Science Fair. ___

3. An evening with someone who would train parents in doing math activities at home with specific age levels of children. ---

4. A Services Fair where parents could explore exhibits from public and private mental health agencies, tutoring services, an Early Child Learning Center, Kid ID, etc. ___

5. A speaker on helping children cope with problems relating to divorce. ___

6. A speaker on having successful parent conferences, and what parents should and should not expect from teachers at various grade levels. ---

7. A speakers on successful discipline techniques. ___

8. Speakers on helping children understand, save, and invest money. ___

9. Speakers on helping children develop good manners. ___

10. Speakers on other aspects of parenting skills such as establishing routines, following through

on training, establishing expectations for children at various developmental levels; and using rewards, punishments, and bribes. ___

11. A speaker on doing reading activities at home with students. ___

12. Programs such as Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP). ___

****

If you have an opinion on any of the following, please express it.

1. What do you think parents should do for their students that many do not now do?

2. What other opportunities for parents should be considered?

3. Is there a special speaker you would like to hear, a film or film series or books you recommend, or a group or agency which you wish to be invited to a services fair?

4. If you would like to be a speaker, facilitator, or consultant, please give your name and topic.

5. If you know a great resource for opportunities for parents which already exists in this community, please identify it.

6. If you know of a possible source of funds for this project, please list it.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO FREE RESPONSE QUESTIONS ON PARENT SURVEY

Summary of Answers to Free Response Questions on Parent Survey

1. What do you think parents should do for their students that many do not now do?

34	Talk, listen understand, or spend quality time.
45	Read, help with school work, be involved academically.
15	Increase involvement other than at school.
11	Teach respect/manners.
12	Train and discipline
7	Values related responses
4	Miscellaneous
128	TOTAL

2. What other opportunities for parents should be considered?

13	Improve parent/school interaction.
8	Child rearing/training/guidance
7	Miscellaneous responses
3	Nutrition
3	Adult focus (yoga)
2	Sex education
36	TOTAL

3. Is there a special speaker you would like to hear, a film or film series or books you recommend, or a group or agency which you wish to be invited to a services fair?

14	Dobson (One family volunteered to by this film series)
3	Elkind
3	psychologists, Terry Brazelton, Virginia Satir, Sandy Pines
2	foreign language
1	Bergalis
1	Tutoring service
1	Unknown
32	TOTAL

4. If you would like to be a speaker, facilitator, or consultant, please give your name and topic.

1	Mariane Pettengill, Educational Consultant (Educational toy demo for daycare, grades k-5, book fair) Discovery Toys

5. If you know a great resource for opportunities for parents which already exists in this community, please

identify it.

4	public library
2	resident treatment centers
2	churches
1	hospital
1	magazine
1	HRS

COMMENTS WITHOUT QUESTIONS

I will gladly respond to this survey when the issue of the Human Sexuality Curriculum is settled to the satisfaction of those concerned. It has become very clear to me that those in charge of our school cannot make responsible decisions concerning the welfare of our children. I just don't trust you people anymore.

Most of the parenting skills mentioned in this survey should be mastered long before your child reaches elementary school age. I think the funds set aside for this project should go to teachers and resources for the school. Parents needing this kind of training probably will not benefit from an evening type program.

The county could have a program where people doing community service could be trained to clean schools - maintain school lawns -then millions would be available for our children's education.

I would be willing to assist with babysitting at the school so that other parents may take advantage of the opportunities of these programs as you are considering. I would like to see parent programs such as putting together Science Fair projects which parents and child would attend together as they learn new skills together. It is hard for one parent families to have enough time for the child.

I think you should implement a program whereby parent volunteers fill the gaps that Budget cuts would leave, such as physical education, assistants, computer tutors, music teachers - or wherever cuts occur

HELP heal the wounded inner child of the parents. Give them more understanding of themselves first, then it is easier to relate to the children.

I feel that the STEP program has helped me a lot. Perhaps some of the money raised at fund raising events at the school. Maybe 1 or 2 speakers per 9 weeks.

Are you trying to teach the children or the parent or find qualified teachers? This is more unnecessary fat on an already fat budget.

Parents at JFE smoke. I want to hear more emphasis on "Just Say No to Cigarettes"

Business should be made more aware of the need for parents to have the time to work and be involved in their children's education. Parents should have more input regarding curriculum.

I have tried to become involved in curriculum, but I

feel I have been discouraged. I do not feel I have a voice in the public school system, that I should just send my children and not make waves. We are discouraged by the way schools are being run here. We do not feel our children are learning at the rate they should be, or learning all they are capable of. We hope to enroll them in private school sometime so they can compete when they are adults. I hope the new superintendent can effect change, but I can't help but feel discouragement.

For the many areas of this project, ask parents to donate books on these subjects to be checked out by other parents. Then there would not need to be so many purchases. Maybe there could be a student Read-a-Thon with parents sponsoring by dollar amount, different grades would have predetermined books to read towards a goal.

APPENDIX E

STAFF SURVEY #2

Staff Survey #2

The goal of this project was to provide opportunities to parents that were needed, relevant, and beneficial for both parents and students, and yet did not increase your work load. Decide to what extent each of the following events met the goal.

0 = not successful
1 = probably not very successful
2 = successful
3 = very successful

1. A parent resource center was opened. ____

2. A speaker encouraged and provided education for parents in talking, listening, understanding and spending quality time with their children. ____

3. A speaker encouraged reading with children and being involved with school work. ____

4. A speaker taught about discipline, manners, and respect. ____

5. A speaker taught about problem ownership and responsibility. ____

6. Parent training was provided in reading, math, or science. ____

7. A flier of parent activities was provided. ____

I teach K-1 ____, 2-3 ____, 4-5 ____, a special area ____, or am employed in another staff position____.

APPENDIX F

PARENT ACTIVITIES EVALUATION FORM

PARENT ACTIVITIES EVALUATION FORM

Write the name of the event attended. _____ ___

Check the grade level of your child. ___ K-1, ___ 2-3, ___ 4-5

If your child attends Jupiter Farms Elementary, check yes.

___ yes ___ no

---

0 = strongly disagree, 1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = strongly agree

---

Please put a number in each blank.

1. The parent is the first and most important teacher of the child. ___

2. I learned something new that a parent can do to increase the opportunities of academic success for my child, or I learned of a community resource. ___

3. The speaker or presenters offered material or ideas which were interesting, important, and useful for me and my age child. ___

4. More information on this subject can be found in the Parent Resource Center. ___

COMMENTS

APPENDIX G

WISH LIST

Dear Reader,

From the list of materials requested by parents for the Parent Resource Center of xxx School, the following wish list has been compiled. Opening of the Parent Resource Center is scheduled for November 16, 1992, in a room in the back of the main school office. Materials will be available for loan to parents at that time.

The Resource Center Committee solicits your donations of any of the following books, new or used, or donations of money with which to purchase the following books and videos. Materials to include in the Center need not be limited to this list. If you have a favorite which would help parents become more effectively involved in the total education of the child, we would gladly accept that donation. Checks should be made payable to xxx School.

Thank you for helping to make the Resource Center a reality.

Parent Resource Center Coordinators,

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER - WISH LIST

Brazelton, T. Berry. Families:Crisis and Caring. 1989, Ballantine, $8.95*

Cambell, Ross. How to Really Love Your Child. Already donated.

Cantor, Lee. Assertive Discipline for Parents. 1988, Harper Perennial, $7.95*

Clarke, Jean. Self-Esteem: A Family Affair. 1987, Winston Press, $12.95*

Curan, Dolores. Traits of a Healthy Family: 15 Traits Found in Healthy Families by Those Who Work with Them. 1983, Winston Press, $10.95*

Dinkmeyer, Don. Parenting Young Children: Helpful Strategies Based on STEP for Parents of Children Under Six. 1989, American Guidance Service, $10.95*

Dinkmeyer, Don, and McKay, Gary. The Parent's Handbook - STEP: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting. 1989, American Guidance Service, $11.00*

Dobson, James. The Strong-Willed Child: Birth through Adolescence.1978, Tyndale House, $9.95* Parenting Isn't for Cowards: Dealing Confidently with the

Frustrations of Child-Rearing. 1987, Word, $10.95*
Dare to Discipline Walden Bookstore, $16.95.

Einstein, Elizabeth. Strengthening Your Stepfamily. 1987, American Guidance Service, $10.95*

Elkind, David. The Hurried Child, Walden Bookstore $10.95. All Grown Up and No Place to Go, Walden Bookstore $8.85. Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk, 1987, Knopf, $10.95*

Faber, Adele, & Mazlish, Elaine. How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk. 1980, Avon. $9.00* Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together So You Can Live Too, 1987, Avon. $8.95*

Galbraith, Judy. The Gifted Kids Survival Guide: For Ages 10 and Under. 1984, Free Spirit. $7.95.*

Gardner, Richard. The Boys and Girls Book about Divorce. Already donated.

Gesell & Ilg. The Child from Five to Ten

Gordon, Thomas. Parent Effectiveness Training: The Tested Way to Raise Responsible Children. 1975, Plume. $10.95*

Hobby, J. H. et al. Staying Back. AGS #NR9541 $12.35**

Knight, Michael, et al. Teaching Children to Love Themselves: A Handbook for Parents and Teachers of Young Children. 1989, Vision Press $9.95*

McGee and Me (Video from Focus on the Family, Public School Edition) already donated

Satir, Virginia. The New Peoplemaking. 1988, Science and Behavior. $15.95.*

Schaefer & Millman. How to Help Children Cope With Problems

Smisek, Sharon. Brain-Powering You Child. Intellectual Development Corporation, Box 5507, Lighthouse Point, FL 33074-5507. $19.00.

The Little Things Make a Big Difference Video $19.95. 25 booklets, $13.95 + $3.50 shipping. National Association of Elementary School Principals. Educational Products, 1615 Duke Street, Alexandria, Va 22314.

*Paperbacks for Educators, 426 West Front St., Washington, MO 63090 (800-227-2591) Add $2.50 shipping for orders under $50.00. Prepaid orders over $50.00 have no shipping charge.

** AGS, Box 99, Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796. Add $2.00 for shipping.